TO BE OR NOT TO BE IN THE PARTY

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TO BE OR NOT TO BE IN THE PARTY

Communist Party Membership in the USSR

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To the memory of my sister, Myrra,

my mother and father

Wherever the body is, there
will the eagles be gathered
together. *Matt.* 24; 28

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INTRODUCTION

In March of 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in the Soviet Union. Initially, one could discern serious changes in the policy and statements of this new, young, and obviously efficient leader only with great difficulty. While abroad, Gorbachev had said that anti-Stalinism was a form of anti-Communism. The newspapers were filled with words lauding "the sacred traditions of the 1930's". At the same time, the campaign against drunkenness, corruption, and sloppiness launched by Yuri Andropov was given a new impetus and the highest Party support.

In April, 1986, the Chernobyl tragedy took place. The first reaction of the Soviet authorities was the usual one. The Soviet public was not properly informed about the disaster and its unprecedented peril. Millions of jubilant Soviet citizens crowded the squares and streets of Kiev and Minsk during the May Day festivities. We can only guess what the reaction of the Kremlin authorities would have been had not Swedish scientists traced and announced to the world the threatening level of radioactivity. Would the terms "*glasnost'*" and "*perestrojka*" have spread through the world press with such intensity and alacrity? A popular Soviet author wrote a year later in the Soviet media: "Chernobyl appeared to be not only a national event, a disaster shared by each of us, but also a dividing line between two eras of time. It cut our life into two parts: the time which was passing, filled with silence, with mysterious and concealed events, all kinds of hearsay, *etc.*; and the new time which we call the epoch of *glasnost'*." The same author concluded:

> *Perestrojka* is a difficult enterprise, but it has entered our life not because anybody wanted it so strongly. We cannot live any longer without it. In our whole life and in our morals we had come up to the barrier, beyond which loomed an abyss, a catastrophe.[1]

One can hardly agree with this approach. The election of Mikhail Gorbachev as the Secretary General, with the support of Andrei Gromyko, and the defeat of Viktor Grišin meant a turning point in the recent history of the Soviet Communist Party. A protégé of Andropov, head of the KGB for years, and the foe of corruption and stagnation within the Party, Gorbachev could make an impression with his relative youth and energy, as well as what was for all practical purposes the *tabula rasa* of his previous political statements. While visiting Canada exactly fifty years after the starvation of millions of Ukrainian

peasants as a result of forced collectivization, Gorbachev announced that this macabre holocaust organized by Stalin had never existed in reality. During the 27th Congress of the Communist Party, which included a number of speeches defying Brezhnev and his period of stagnation, one could feel the beginnings of change. Gorbachev's sophisticated policy included a more rigid attitude toward dissidents and political prisoners.

After the 27th Party Congress and Chernobyl, a real landmark in the development of *glasnost'* was the Congress of Soviet Writers in June, 1986, and Gorbachev's address to a group of Soviet writers on June 19 of the same year. Gorbachev's speech at this closed meeting was unprecedented. He said that changes and reforms in society were overdue.

> Between the people who want those changes, who dream of those changes, and the leadership, there is a layer - an *apparat* of ministries, a Party *apparat* - that does not want changes and does not want to lose some of the rights associated with privileges.[2]

In his speech, Gorbachev characterized drunkenness as "the national tragedy". He proved that he was familiar with the epithets and jokes about himself that were spread among the people - such nicknames as "mineral secretary", or the rhyme "We'll keep drinking like before, we'll exhume Brezhnev once more." He underlined the danger of degradation menacing the Slavic nationalities in the Soviet Union - the Russians, Ukrainians and White Russians.

> The economy is very disordered. We lag in all indices ... The figures [on drunkenness] are frightening. We're not going to scare you, but we won't walk away from this. We will fight. ... We have forgotten how to work. Not only that, we have forgotten how to work in democratic conditions. ... We're restructuring everything, from the General Secretary to the rank-and-file Communist. Democracy without *glasnost'* does not exist. At the same time, democracy without limits is anarchy. ... Society is ripe for change. If we backslide, society will not be in agreement with this.

This approach by a Communist leader in Russia showed that he was far from being naive.

Since early 1986, events in Soviet Russia have reached a crescendo. Several Soviet prisoners of conscience, including Anatolij Ščaranskij, Irina Ratušinskaja, and Juri Orlov, were surprisingly allowed to leave Russia. In December, 1986, Andrei Sakharov received an unprecedented phone call from Gorbachev and returned to

Moscow in triumph. Academician Sakharov was allowed to give a series of live interviews to a number of leading Western-European and North-American television networks, in which he stated that he had been released without preconditions. He expressed his indignation at the death of his friend Anatolij Marčenko from a lengthy hunger-strike in prison. He demanded the release of many Soviet political prisoners from jails, prison camps, and mental hospitals, and insisted on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. All these statements by the Nobel Peace Prize winner, who had been brutally persecuted over many years for making similar statements, came like a bolt out of the blue. The leading statesmen of the world, including Margaret Thatcher and Henry Kissinger, had a chance to speak with Sakharov at the British Embassy or in his Moscow apartment.

A number of leading Soviet political prisoners were released from their incarceration and allowed to go home. The mathematician Juri Sichanovič, a victim of mental hospitals and prison camps, the biologist Sergej Kovalev, a human-rights activist of incredible courage and dignity, Feliks Svetov and Zoja Krachmalnikova, Russian writers with profound religious convictions, Sergej Grigorjanc and Lev Timofeev, gifted writers who had been sentenced to many years in prison for their writings and convictions, the religious activist Aleksandr Ogorodnikov, the Russian Orthodox priest Gleb Jakunin and dozens of others were unexpectedly released from their prisons or exile. Unlike Sakharov, many of these former prisoners were released after they had written at least several words which could be interpreted by the authorities as a promise not to resume their "anti-social activities". Quite often, these words were vague or empty, but the authorities needed at least something in writing. When these former prisoners returned to their homes they were by no means restored to their former positions: a prominent scientist works as a night watchman; a religious activist is threatened with exile from Moscow. But they came back home at a time when the Soviet press was inundated with stunningly critical articles, publications which a few years earlier would have brought arrest and trial. Father Gleb Jakunin, who had infuriated the Soviet authorities so many times with his daring statements and actions, was promised a parish in the suburbs of Moscow.

In the sphere of the Soviet media scores of unprecedented events took place. Nikolaj Gumilev, a great Russian poet executed by the Bolsheviks in 1921 and suppressed since that time, was given a certain amount of publicity and some of his poems, which can be recited by heart by any intelligent Russian person, were at last published in the national media. The poem, *Requiem*, written by his former wife, Anna Achmatova, in memory of the victims of Stalin's purges and massacres, was at last printed in the journal *Moskva*. That masterpiece of Russian

prose, Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*, banned for almost thirty years, was to be published in *Novyj mir*, the same magazine which had rejected the novel in 1956 and triggered the scandalous condemnation of the author by the Soviet authorities. Aleksandr Tvardovskij's poem, forbidden during his lifetime, was also published; many of its lines challenged Stalin's forced collectivization and mourned numerous victims among the innocent peasants. One should keep in mind that the crimes against millions of peasants starved to death in their villages or exiled to Siberia were the worst of this century's holocausts and massacres. Andrej Platonov's *Pitfall*, written during the period of collectivization and obliterated for decades in his native land, was published as well.

Irina Odoevceva, an old Russian poet, returned to her native city, which now bears the name of Lenin. Vladimir Nabokov, who passionately hated the Soviet regime, is now being published in his native country after many decades of slanderous criticism or enforced silence. Vladislav Chodasevič, who escaped from Russia in 1922 and died in emigration and poverty, would be happy to see his name restored and some of his poems published in the Soviet press. Viktor Nekrasov's obituary, after his death in Paris in September, 1987, was published in the *Moscow News* and signed by four authors, including Bulat Okudžava and Gleb Baklanov. Such Russian artists as Ernst Neizvestnij and Michail Šemjakin, who emigrated in the 1970's, were mentioned in *Literaturnaja gazeta* in a favorable context, with regret expressed that they had been forced to leave their country. The most famous Soviet theater producer, Juri Ljubimov, was asked by many actors of the Taganka theater - created and nourished by him - to return home from his exile abroad. Mikhail Baryshnikov, a world-famous ballet-dancer who had defected from the Soviet Union and played the main role in the relatively anti-Soviet film, *White Nights*, has been asked to revisit his motherland and to perform on the stage of the Bolshoi Theater. Hundreds of Russian émigrés who have become American or Canadian citizens have been allowed to visit their native country as tourists or as part of official American delegations.

Numerous visitors to Moscow, both foreign and former Soviet citizens, have been able to speak almost freely with Muscovites, including their former friends. The correspondence of Soviet citizens with people abroad in 1987 quite often became almost free and uninhibited. Various newsmen, especially TV broadcasters, have been able to meet Soviet people and officials, and arrange direct interviews which could only bewilder all those familiar with the fabric of Soviet life and the previously restricted possibilities for Soviet people to chat with foreigners.

The sensational events in the world of Soviet arts and letters form a

long list. The Soviet audience, after some delay, was shown the film *Repentance* by Tengiz Abuladze, a Soviet producer. This masterpiece showed the horrors of the secret-police nightmare intrigues engineered by Lavrentij Berija, Stalin's ill-famed hatchetman, albeit in a softened and veiled manner. This movie, along with the novel, *The Children of Arbat*, by Anatolij Rybakov, published in Moscow in *Družba narodov* in the Spring of 1987, could be considered two major highlights among hundreds of other important events in Russian life since the Summer of 1986. The author of *The Children of Arbat*, a well-known Soviet writer in his mid-seventies, had been waiting for the publication of his novel for at least twenty years. Like many other distinguished Soviet writers and artists, Anatolij Rybakov recently visited the United States, where he spoke to various audiences.

The number of publications in the official press which at one time would have been cause for arrest and prison is almost too large to register at this stage. Various thick journals - newspapers like *Literaturnaja gazeta* and magazines like *Ogonek* - publish materials on a regular basis which can only arouse feelings of interest and gratitude. In the first issue of *Literaturnaja gazeta*, edited by the notorious Aleksandr Čakovskij, who for several decades in Russia and abroad spread disinformation about the real situation in the country and in the world of art and thought, Academician Dmitrij S. Lichačev published his lengthy essay, 'The Pangs of Conscience'. This article by a famous scholar cannot be easily forgotten, and I cannot help but cite several significant passages.

> At this time, very important changes are taking place in public opinion: people no longer try to present themselves as stubborn, insistent and narrow-minded executors of someone else's will, which formerly would have been considered a virtue ... I am in a position to compare this situation with other years, and I can say that from time to time the public conscience has altered: honest people experienced difficulties. Now this public conscience has changed and allows good people to advance. This means that the evil-minded are obliged to hide themselves, to disguise and conceal their bitterness, their evil aspects, their ugly actions ... Let them pretend: after a while, they will be replaced by really good people, because - I believe in this - the change in the public conscience will be followed by a serious shift in the character of people.

This well-known, aged scholar, who experienced grave hardships in Stalin's time, works hand-in-hand in the Soviet Cultural Fund with Ms. Raisa Gorbacheva, the wife of Mikhail Gorbachev. His words about Russian culture are genuinely moving, although quite often he speaks

on the level of under-statement, something easily understandable in his situation and solidly outweighed by his other statements.

> In recent years, we have felt the shortage, the deficit of civil courage because we kept silent. There were, seemingly, objective reasons for our silence: those people who committed bad actions were in key positions in society. Nevertheless, this does not release us from responsibility, and does not justify our mutual guilt. Each of us saw it, and we kept ... silent. Our conscience kept silent. What were we afraid of? There is no fear in truth. Truth and fear are incompatible. We should be afraid of nothing but our vicious thoughts, our own thoughts which are lacking in due respect for our friends, or for any human being in our motherland. We should have only one fear - the fear of the lie. Only then will there be a healthy moral atmosphere in our society.

The eighty-year-old academician writes about concepts of enormous value for Russian society. He deserves the highest credit for his article. Nevertheless, from his high moral standpoint he sees little wrong in the fact that he quite obviously reminds us of Solzhenitsyn's famous 'Live not According to the Lie', without mentioning this giant of social conscience at all: the name of this famous exile is still under a ban, even in the time of *glasnost'*. Lichačev appeals to the readers of this newspaper to respect the citizens of his motherland. What about people living in other countries? Those who live in capitalist countries or in Afghanistan, where Soviet soldiers still render their assistance to the bleeding fraternal nation and try their utmost to help the Soviet puppets build "socialism" in their own fashion? Dmitrij Lichačev mentions Vladimir Lenin, but he does not mention God, although his article is permeated by the Christian spirit. He ends his discourse on an interesting note:

> What is important for a human being? How should one live one's whole life? First of all: one should not commit any actions which will deprive a human being of dignity. One should not necessarily do a lot of things in one's life, but if you do nothing against your conscience, not even the tiniest action, by so conducting yourself you bring a great goodness to others, even in our everyday, routine life. But, sometimes the difficult situation arises in life, when a human person faces the problem of whether to be dishonored in the eyes of those who surround him or in his own eyes. I am convinced that it is better to be dishonored before others than before one's own conscience. A human being should know how to sacrifice himself. Of course, such a sacrifice is a heroic deed. But,

it ought to be done.

It is not often that one reads such words in the Soviet press. This is a beginning to the real *perestrojka* being launched in the souls of Soviet humans! The morale and ethics of the Soviet people must have reached a low ebb indeed if such appeals must be published in the national press. What a pity that even such authors cannot tell the whole truth!

Among many other important articles and works published in 1987, we must devote some attention to a challenging essay written by Nikolaj Šmelev and published in the June issue of *Novyj mir*. The article was indeed sensational. If D. Lichačev dwelt upon the moral and ethical issues of society, Šmelev emphasizes the economic situation in the country, evaluating the conditions in the cities and villages with rare vigor, sincerity, and pessimism. Šmelev considers that Stalin's rejection of Lenin's "New Economic Policy" (NEP) has led to severe complications in socialist construction in the USSR: "once again, as in 1953 and 1965, we will doom ourselves to half-measures, and as we all know, half-measures are frequently worse than doing nothing at all".[4] In the author's words, the deep-rooted practice of using administrative methods based on force and violence, proved to be disastrous. He quotes Academician T.S. Zaslavskaja:

> The frequent clashes with various forms of social injustice, the fruitlessness of attempts to continue the individual struggle with various aspects of this injustice became one of the main reasons for the alienation on the part of some workers from social goals and values.[5]

We know all too well what "on the part of some workers" means in Soviet parlance. And Šmelev continues:

> Apathy and indifference, theft and the absence of respect towards honest labor became widespread among the masses, while at the same time there was aggressive envy towards those persons who earn good money, even if they earn this money honestly ... There appeared signs of almost physical degradation in the essential part of the people as the result of drunkenness and idleness. And along with that there was born the distrust in promulgated aims and intentions, in the possibility of a more reasonable organization of economic and social life.[6]

After several decades of official lies about the state of agriculture in the central part of Russia, Šmelev writes what any intelligent person in the Soviet Union knows all too well:

> The Russian non-black-soil region requires special measures. The degradation of the village has reached such a depth that probably no measures taken within the framework of the existing system of agrarian relationships can help. One may rely only on slow and varied therapy - an individual approach to each region, to each household. The existing system of monetary stimulation for honest labor functions insufficiently not just because it is good for nothing. The salaries and prizes do not stimulate because one can buy nothing with the money earned.[7]

Šmelev thinks that "one must call everything by its proper name: foolishness is foolishness, incompetence is incompetence, and currently existing Stalinism is currently existing Stalinism". In his article the author shows the moral danger of using administrative methods to control everything in society and economics, when, as is well-known, the double mentality, the second culture, the underground economy and the black market start to thrive: "Attempts to achieve one hundred percent control over everything and everybody produce such spontaneity and lack of control that, in comparison, any form of anarchy would be the mother of order."[8]

Such statements would have been unthinkable in previous decades. Gorbachev and his colleagues, with their slogans of *glasnost'*, democratization, and *perestrojka*, have attracted the attention of world public opinion, but at the same time they have puzzled people throughout the world. Can one trust Gorbachev and his statements? If not, why has he been doing what he has been doing? Was he really eager to make revolutionary changes in Russia? Does he intend to launch radical changes in the Communist Party, which - for the time being, at any rate - he heads?

The structure, functioning, and goals of the Soviet Communist Party represent one of the most important and vital aspects of Soviet society. The future of the country, where almost twenty million Soviet men and women are members of this single Party, depends in the final analysis on the Party and its membership. If, in Gorbachev's words, these twenty million members of the Communist Party represent one tenth of the adult population in the country, one should add that, together with their families, they constitute the essential core of Soviet society in general. The fate of the *perestrojka* will ultimately depend on them.

To what extent will the democratization proclaimed by Gorbachev penetrate the life of the Communist Party? Such a large army of the potentially best citizens of the state is bound to its leaders, as is well-known, by the iron discipline and obedience of the rank-and-file

members, in accordance with the principles of "democratic centralism".

Until recently, there was no indication whatsoever that any of the strict rules on which the whole activity and existence of the Soviet Communist Party is based have any inclination to be changed or modified. There is no indication at all that the members of the Communist Party may use their right (guaranteed by the Party Constitution) to leave the Party if they so desire. Quite recently, the curious case of Jurij Mitjunov, a senior editor of the Moscow Central Broadcasting Program, has become well-known, especially outside the Soviet Union. In August, 1987, Jurij Mitjunov mailed a letter to Mr. Jim Wright, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, in which he described what happened to him during the past year.

Jurij Mitjunov received his PhD in modern history from Moscow State University in 1976. He had joined the Communist Party in 1975. Until 1982, Mitjunov worked in the Soviet for Religious Affairs under the USSR Soviet of Ministers, but in 1982 he started work in Moscow Central Broadcasting as a senior editor in the department responsible for broadcasting abroad. In March, 1986, he announced his decision to leave the Communist Party, along with two other members, Ms. M.G. Kupcova and Mr. I.P. Majorov. The main reason for their decision to leave the Party was their conclusion that "the Party declares one thing, but in reality acts differently".[9] The Party organization of State Radio and Television expelled Mitjunov for views incompatible with the policies of the Soviet Communist Party, and raised the question of firing him from State Radio and Television. Mr. Ovečkin, a Party official of the Moscow Party Committee, threatened to have Mitjunov confined to a mental institution, despite the fact that Mitjunov was absolutely healthy and sane. By July, 1986, Mitjunov had been fired from his job and has remained unemployed since then. The case of Mitjunov and his friends took place at exactly the same time that the Soviet Communist Party was struggling to chart a new course of *glasnost'* and 'democratization'.

However, the most exciting and intriguing episode to reveal the inner mechanism of the Communist Party leadership is the case of Boris El'cyn (Yeltsyn). El'cyn, the First Secretary of the Moscow City Party Organization, has been acting as Gorbachev's right-hand man and the most passionate follower of his reforms since the 27th Party Congress. Largely due to El'cyn's efforts since the end of 1986, the atmosphere of Moscow intellectual and social life changed rapidly for the better. New social groups and organizations were formed. Numerous publications and meetings challenged the public. The Party conservatives, headed by Egor K. Ligačev, launched a massive offensive against El'cyn.

On October 21, 1987, at a meeting of the Communist Party's Central Committee, Boris El'cyn made a speech with insistent demands

to accelerate the *perestrojka*. According to information received in the West, El'cyn blamed the Central Committee for having created hurdles and difficulties in implementing the *perestrojka*, and criticized Mr. Ligačev personally. Among other allegations made by El'cyn, according to TASS, he "went so far as to say that restructuring was giving virtually nothing to the people".[10] According to the *New York Times*, which quotes one Soviet official who took part in the Central Committee meeting on October 21, "Mr. Ligačev openly blamed Mr. Gorbachev for promoting Mr. El'cyn and declared that he had always doubted Mr. El'cyn's abilities and stability."[11] El'cyn obviously went too far. He criticized the system of privileged shopping for the *nomenklatura* and wanted to introduce some limitations in the handling of chauffered cars for officials.[12] Moscow Party officials were less than happy with the style of El'cyn's everyday activities, for he did not hesitate to expose their corruption. In El'cyn's open-mindedness and straight-forwardness, Muscovites saw the much-lauded features of their deified Lenin.

It is difficult, if not utterly impossible to reconstruct what El'cyn might actually have said at the Central Committee meeting on October 21, even in this period of much-proclaimed *glasnost'*. It is impossible to confirm the allegations directed against El'cyn, asserting that he criticized Gorbachev himself for promoting his own "cult of personality". It was, however, El'cyn who had amazed the world during the 27th Party Congress by saying that he had abstained from criticizing Brezhnev only because he was afraid of doing so. Now, in a period of reform and democratization, he could do it. It is not excluded that El'cyn's speech on October 21 was triggered by the content of Gorbachev's speech which was to be delivered on November 2. El'cyn, who had gone "too far" in his quest for Lenin's methods, might have been offended by the many pro-Stalinist statements in Gorbachev's prepared speech.

For Gorbachev, El'cyn's case could be the beginning of a disaster. Ligačev's attack on El'cyn was an undisguised offensive against Gorbachev's reforms. Gorbachev could neither resign himself nor replace Ligačev, the number two man in the Communist Party hierarchy. All that remained for him was to fire his close aide, Boris El'cyn. This gesture reminds one of the removal of Mikhail Speransky by Alexander I on the eve of the 1812 War with Napoleon: the loss of Speransky meant the return of Arakcheev and the end of the liberal period in the reign of the young Tsar.

El'cyn fell victim to the struggle between Party conservatives and the followers of the *perestrojka*. The existence of such personalities as Boris El'cyn shows that the ideals of Marxism-Leninism are not necessarily utterly dead among Party members, although people holding

these views seldom gain the upper hand in their rivalry with cold-minded bureaucrats. Gorbachev retreated by sacrificing a comrade-in-arms to his ideological foes. Even worse, on November 11 he was forced to make a major speech against his close friend, saying that "El'cyn placed personal ambitions above the interests of the Party"[13], which is far from being true.

El'cyn's case was an overture and an epilogue to the long-expected major speech by Gorbachev on November 2, 1987, which was dedicated to the seventieth anniversary of the Revolution of 1917. The world expected a great deal from this speech, hoping that Gorbachev would criticize Stalin and rehabilitate his numerous victims. The disappointment of world public opinion with this speech was profound and lasting. Gorbachev spoke about Stalin's important contribution to the struggle against the opposition, his efforts to promote the collectivization of the country and to win victory in World War Two. Gorbachev spoke of "thousands of those who suffered without being guilty of anything". Stalin was not qualified as a criminal. "The guilt of Stalin and his immediate entourage before the Party and the people for the wholesale repressive measures and acts of lawlessness is enormous and unforgiveable. This is a lesson for all generations."[14] But a few words prior to that, Gorbachev appealed to his audience to keep in mind that "to remain faithful to historical truth, we have also to see Stalin's incontestable contributions to the struggle for socialism and to the defence of its gains". Several ambiguous phrases in praise of Bukharin and Khrushchev by no means save the speech, which demonstrates how little the General Secretary of the Communist Party can do in restoring historical truth, even in an atmosphere of widely proclaimed revolution, *glasnost'*, and democratization. Soviet officials may be able to deceive many people in the West, but in their official Party speeches and documents they cannot move too far. They are bound by the discipline of their own Party, with its "heroic past", and they have to keep twenty million members in strict obedience.

* * *

In order to understand Soviet society better, one should be acquainted with the curious phenomenon of Communist Party membership in the Soviet Union. Why do people join this Party? Do they preserve their freedom while members? Are they allowed to leave the Party, if they decide that being in the Party is incompatible with their real aspirations? What happens to those people who are expelled from the Party? This book is concerned with such central questions of Soviet life.

For major help at various stages of work on this book, I would like to express my gratitude to Thomas Blakeley and Raymond McNally,

both of Boston College; to many of my Russian friends, especially Victor Yampolsky, Chicago, and Gregory Svirsky, Toronto; and to members of my family, especially my son Gregory, whose assistance in the early phases of the work was invaluable.

* * *

A note on the transcription of Russian names. Following the usual *Sovietica* practice, pre-revolutionary Russian names (*e.g.* Chernyshevsky) and those which have currency in Western publications (like Khrushchev) have been left in their normal form. For names from the Soviet period, we have used the transcription system of *Studies in Soviet Thought.* In marginal cases, we have provided the alternative transcription in parentheses: *e.g.* El'cyn (Yeltsyn).

CHAPTER ONE

Why do People join the Communist Party?

While pondering the rather complicated phenomenon of Party membership in the Soviet Union, one may recall a joke quite popular in my milieu prior to my departure from the Soviet Union in 1972: Almighty God bestowed upon all human beings three traits: integrity, intelligence and Party membership. However, the condition was given that out of these three traits each person could take any two only, but never all three at once. Hence one could obtain integrity and Party membership, but could not claim intelligence, which is to say that he would remain an honest fool. If he wished to appropriate intelligence and Party membership, he would have to dispense with integrity, which means that he would be regarded as a smart crook. If, anyhow, intelligence and integrity were the traits that this or another human being intended to acquire, he would have to leave his aspirations to become a Party member. To my knowledge, this joke had been widespread in Hitler's Germany and after a while made its journey to an adjacent country with a parallel state-Party structure. The joke does not lose its value at this time and it unfolds a rather curious facet of this otherwise enormously complicated and disguised phenomenon in the country where for the time being each member of the almost twenty million strong army is allegedly proud of carrying his red Party card.

The psychological nature of Party membership, being of enormous interest and importance for our better understanding of Soviet society from the inside, remains essentially undiscovered and undescribed, although a number of distinguished authors attract our attention to this subject. The Soviet media and the ideological literature invariably and incessantly laud Party membership to the sky as the highest honor with which the Soviet society, the most fair, advanced, and free in human history, can reward its most conscientious citizens.

The Communist Party is "the mind, honor and conscience of our epoch"[1], and in the Communist Party's words, there cannot be any more tangible trust than to be allowed to join the rank and file of this glorious institution. In this time of *glasnost'* or openness, the official press admits that there still exist certain people who have unworthily sneaked into the Party, but the Communist Party cannot but endorse Vladimir Lenin's words that it makes itself stronger by getting rid of undesirable and unreliable individuals. When prominent Soviets die and carefully worded obituaries are printed in newspapers, in ninety-five cases out of a hundred, one may note the early age at which the de-

ceased statesman had joined the Soviet Communist Party. It makes, of course, a great difference whether the deceased, so incredibly prominent and famous for his contribution to the cause of the revolution and socialism-building, had joined the Communist Party while still in his teens or early twenties, like Joseph Stalin and his comrades-in-arms, or in his late thirties and even later. In the latter case a reader may come to the conclusion that the illustrious statesman, described in the obituary, joined the Communist Party after continued scruples and hesitation.

In the West, the phenomenon of the Soviet Communist Party is not always clear. Judging from the fact that even the former members of Communist Parties are not necessarily welcome to enter the United States and if they are allowed to enter the country as alien residents, a ten-year period is established instead of the normal five years needed to become a citizen of the United States, Communist Party membership does not promise a great deal of advantages and benefits for its card-holders. However, reading the Western press, watching TV, speaking with Western intellectuals and visiting various bookstores where Stalin's portraits hang near those of Marx and Lenin, one may observe that Party membership conceals in itself something extremely attractive and prestigious. My numerous conversations with liberal-minded individuals in the West, urged me time and again to revise my own assumptions and convictions concerning Party membership. Quite often, I am not entirely sure whether an educated person in the West would prefer to listen to a Soviet "dissident" who has never been a member of the Communist Party, or to a Soviet Communist with long years of experience of Party membership.

This book will attempt to show to the Western readers that Party membership and its nature is the key to understanding the enigmatic Soviet psychology. More than that, the Party membership phenomenon may be characterized as flourishing while the Western public feels attracted and even enchanted by its nature. From this standpoint, it is increasingly important to consider what various Soviet Party members think about themselves and the Party itself. In addition, the views and testimonies of those who chose not to enroll themselves in the Party, should be taken into account as well as the views of those individuals who had the dubious luck of becoming Party members for many years, but were then forced for whatever reasons, to cancel their active or passive membership. While embarking upon this path of writing, I cherish the hope that by interpreting the phenomenon of Party membership we may be able to penetrate some depths of this peculiar and quite unprecedented society. In many cases, Party members will not be necessarily proud of belonging to this glorious body "founded by Lenin and Stalin". Their Party membership appears to be the real axis around

which their life keeps on revolving and at the same time it appears as the never-dying worm of remorse and bad conscience that gnaws at their innermost parts almost day and night. Their own inner voice pursues them if they are unable to stifle it, but even then, finding oneself in public, one discerns in the eyes of his friends and acquaintances what they really think about his or her Party membership. Party membership may be the road leading to the peak of the ladder of social status and material comfort, but the same Party membership may be a source of inner pangs and self-torture.

The concept of the Communist Party has been undergoing continual modification in the eyes of the Soviet people in general. The image of the Party has changed with its leading figures, beginning with Lenin and Stalin, through Khrushchev, and Brezhnev, up to Andropov, Chernenko and Gorbachev. The majority of the Soviet populace considers that Lenin lived modestly and thought not so much about his ambitions and joys as about his own country. The character of Stalin is closely interwoven with the idea of a rigid master, ready to punish the guilty and to reward the industrious patriots. In spite of his abundant talkativeness and foolishness, people seem to think favorably about Khrushchev; there was some spark of humanity in him and he seemed to show some concern towards ordinary citizens. With Brezhnev, these tendencies rapidly deteriorated for his ambitions did not go much beyond the domain of his own power. In the succeeding period of Andropov, Chernenko and Gorbachev, one cannot avoid thinking about the modern efficiency of the secret police, the computerized surveillance, and the tricky sophistication of cold-blooded, professional thugs.

During the first fifteen years of the Soviet system, there remained few of those who were not permeated by the dominant propaganda that proclaimed the advent of a new and sun-shiningly happy society. With the mass-starvation, cannibalism and holocausts throughout the 1930's, only indoctrinated teenagers and narrow-minded grown-ups kept on trusting the owners of the Kremlin slaughterhouse. In the 1940's, with the unprecedentedly wicked war and the succeeding years of economic depression and restoration, the Party members could be still seen among those who worked hard and risked their lives and security. In the last years of Stalin's reign, characterized by their secrecy and treachery, any remaining aura around Party members as self-sacrificing builders of the new society was disastrously diminishing. Since Khrushchev's ascent to power, the decrepitude of the new society lay in front of all. One needed special efforts in self-deception in order to overlook the real face of the surviving Russia with the poverty, drunkenness, and ignorance of her main populace and with the incredible selfishness and greediness of her privileged elite and upper middle class.

Until Stalin's death, becoming a member of the Communist Party reminded one at least of revolutionary enthusiasm. With the extermination of those Party members who followed Trotsky, Bukharin and others, the figure of the selfless and dedicated Communist nearly abandoned the public stage for good. A narrow-minded philistine, greedy for a secure and comfortable life, climbed onto the platform, firmly resolved to keep on sitting comfortably in his well-paying armchair. Bold and truth-seeking individuals, especially those who thought about the people's well-being, became dangerous rivals and adversaries in their eyes, for sooner or later they would attempt to prove that Party membership and its lofty ideals were incompatible with the self-complacent philistinism that feathers its own nest. The machinery of refined intrigues and hypocrisy started rolling over its accelerating wheels. After the suicidal decisions of the Twentieth Party Congress, the suppression of Hungary, and the scandal with the publication of *Doctor Zhivago* (which is now at last to be published in the Soviet Union), there was little hope left for any radical improvement. The Communist Party was looked upon as a highly centralized institution with sophisticated apparatus capable of convincing its subjects through concealed but palpable ways of repression and possessing an enormous capacity for camouflage and survival.

Nevertheless, almost each grown-up person, at some stage of his or her life faces a crucial question: Should he or she join the Communist Party? The older this person becomes, the more difficult it might be to join the Party. To a certain extent, it is true that one is never forced to join the Communist Party. At the same time, the surrounding environment encourages this or another person to join it. Morally, it is easier to join the Party at an early stage, while the Party and its method of operation are still wrapped up in mystery and heroic tunics. Friends will not be exceedingly intolerant and indignant when the fact of one's Party membership is presented to their attention. Why should one raise any scandal for this decision if close to twenty million Soviet citizens have unashamedly enlisted themselves into the only existing Party of the country? Joining the Communist Party at a later stage is bound up with many more obstacles and temptations. In one's twenties and thirties, almost every person compiles sufficient data to make necessary conclusions about the nature of the Soviet society and its conscious revolutionary vanguard: the Communist Party. Most Party members do not belong to the best part of the human world. The individual who decides to enter the Party, has to overcome a good number of his idiosyncrasies and sometimes even reflexes of disgust, in order to convince himself that he cannot avoid joining the Party. In many cases, this person had been trying for many years to convince his wife, relatives, and close friends that the Party was a criminal body, full of

crooks and scoundrels. He needed a lot of eloquent arguments to assure himself that he had no right to multiply the number of cut-throats and criminals in the world. Many of those who have been listening to his passionate philippics without making any comments, still remain among the non-Party members, while he has enlisted himself into the ranks of the army dishonored by his own repeated testimonies. Quite infrequently, this decision to join the Party might reach a dangerous point and produce the effect of a moral and family disaster. By which tricks will such a person repair the damage done to his image in the eyes of his wife or his close friends? Of course, there are at least many thousands of cases and variations which might be observed in these vicissitudes under the strained pressure of society, environment and family. Or what torture of conscience might be endured by a husband, when his wife, endowed with a brisk temperament and social activity, acquires the Party "red card", thereby transforming him into a laughing-stock for his family, friends, old cronies and neighbors?

The tragi-comical aspect of the decision to enter the Party is connected with the fact that there are many entrances to this building of Party membership, but not a single safe exit. Unlike membership in the Young Communist League, Party membership is a life-long commitment. Death alone releases one from this advantage or burden. And even after death, a member of the Party does not enjoy the freedom to handle his posthumous fate independently of those who claim him as inherently belonging to their team. After years of Party membership, many people would pay substantially to have a chance to leave the Party without disastrous consequences. Perhaps, at the moment of entering the Party, the person is encouraged by widening horizons and innumerable advantages foreseen by him as the result of his step. Quite often, Party members try to justify their presence in the Party by the fact that they had joined it in the 1920's, or during the war between the battles, or even in the heat of them. These explanations and excuses might be interpreted as undoubtedly relevant, but at the same time they are slightly amusing and puzzling. In the time when the Soviet system did not stand solidly on its feet, this old Party member intended to strengthen it by his decision and activities. During the war, when death was hovering over each participant of those never-to-be forgotten battles, what additional strength was given to the person who had signed his application with the request to consider him a member of the Communist Party? Paying our humble tribute to millions of war victims, we are tempted to recall the final lines in the second part of V. Voinovich's novel about private Chonkin where, after the battle, the self-styled selectionist found under the hoof of the slain gelding, Osoviakhim, a short note with the following content: "If I perish, I ask you to consider myself a Communist."[2] As a result of this discovery,

the progressive atheist, Gladyšev, appealed in embarrassment to God and for the first time in many years crossed himself.

The Party is not in itself a great mystery, but at the same time there are a great deal of mysterious and even mystical elements in it. On its lower level, you cannot find many secrets, though everywhere you will find some of them. The Party is never fatigued to proclaim its unity with the people, while at the same time it tends to be separated from them. Like the people, the Party is simultaneously an abstract and utterly concrete category. The Party strives to penetrate all corners of the Soviet society. From this point of view, the Party is the creation of a genius, for the Party cements and mesmerizes the whole society from the bottom to the top. Therefore, for some it is extremely easy to enter the Party, while for others it is difficult or even impossible. The workers who wish to join the Party will enter it without great difficulties, if they are not blacklisted as idlers or scandalous drunks or thieves. However, as a rule, workers do not often express the desire to enter the Party which claims to represent the vanguard of the working class or proletariat. So far as peasants or collective farmers are concerned, it will be too difficult, if not utterly unthinkable to trace among them any visible or even hidden enthusiasm to join the Party. In the above-mentioned book, Voinovich described rather accurately the Party organization headed by Kilin in the village of Krasnoe.[3] Under the conditions of enforced slavery and labor rewarded by wages at the poverty level, any desire to join the Party should be qualified as rather strange, highly unreasonable, and only rarely leading to any pragmatic goals.

Ordinarily, people try to join the Communist Party in cities and in the military forces. Here, hardly anybody has any serious doubts about the real intentions of those claiming Party membership. The number of those people, usually quite young, who will apply for membership because of their ideals and patriotic aspirations will be incredibly minimal. However, in a country of centralized and, until recently, quite uniform, media possessing an impressive ability to convince its citizens of the victorious completion of Communism-building, there will always be naive and trustworthy persons who would like to apply for membership with the best intentions only to feel frustration in a number of months or years. There is another group of relatively honest and inspired persons who will apply for membership in order to struggle for social justice "from the inside". They do not even make any attempts to conceal from themselves the obvious fact that the existing Communist Party abounds in vain, empty-headed, greedy and dishonest individuals, but they want to convince themselves that inside the Party they will find themselves in a more appropriate position to influence favorably their milieu and society in general. If these ideals lie in the

very heart of some young Party members, one must add here that this peculiar road creates for such persons ever-increasing hindrances and stumbling-blocks with the final result that these enthusiasts are ruthlessly ejected from the Party and more than frequently come to a tragic end.

In the Summer of 1968, in Obninsk, located at no great distance from Moscow, Valerij Pavlinčuk tragically died as a consequence of his self-sacrificial campaign in defense of social justice from "inside the Party".[4] In the same year, Ivan Jachimovič, the chairman of a Latvian collective farm, sent his passionate public letter to Mikhail Suslov and ended up in a mental hospital. Their examples, only a few among many, sound as a warning to those idealists who would strive to use the Party and their membership in it as a possible channel for self-expression and outspokenness. With *perestrojka* and *glasnost'* under way, it is too early to say how seriously this process of officially advertised and supported change will affect the real foundation of the established routine and *zastoj*, widely acknowledged by the Party press. From this point of view, the Party does not make a person stronger: it just binds his hands and feet with a tight rope.

Whatever the declarations of the candidates for Party membership might be, as a rule they creep into the Party for purely earthly and materialistic reasons. If the person wants not only to live in the society and keep his body and soul together, but to achieve promotion and success in accordance with the unwritten rule, he has to enroll himself in the Party. Party membership is the most rewarding investment of his energy. The green light for swelling the ranks of the Party presents itself to the solicitant as the forgiveness of all his apparent or concealed sins and misdemeanors towards his beloved Soviet system. Whatever childish creatures the Soviet compatriots remain until they breathe their last, they know with their guts that the state secret police, which shares its meaningful information with the regional Party committees, keeps a thorough file of their *curriculum vitae* and of their not necessarily most praiseworthy actions and statements made during friendly and intimate discussions over brandy.

The Soviet system would have fallen apart long ago, had it not been cemented by its many strengths, including the ubiquitous state security and the fear that until recently paralyzed each individual and the whole nation in general. To refrain from any actions or utterances, which may provide an essential job and mental food for ever-vigilant agents of state security, one should perhaps be an angel, although without overstating the case, we should admit that in the eyes of the Soviet Penal Law, angels ought to be treated as first-rate criminals for spreading the religious opium of the masses. Having received membership after scrupulous investigations, discussions and procedures lasting many months

on various levels from his plant or college up to the omnipotent regional Party Committee, the person finally becomes socially clean like a new-born baby. At least he is inclined to think so. At this point, he loses his status of a social pariah or outcast. He becomes a "powerful" member of the Party in his organization. Instead of being afraid of others, he or she may now impose fright upon them. His Party card serves him as a kind of "safe conduct", since from now on he thinks that he cannot be arrested without any warning or be fired from his work without any notice. Of course, he deludes himself here because he knows all too well that in the 1930's, Communists were arrested in greater numbers than non-Party members and, in the late 1940's and early 1950's, the holders of Party cards were losing their prestigious positions after an almost unidentifiable nod from their Party boss.

But Soviet life is irrational, and the new Party member feels jubilant that he may now become the boss of his factory or department. And if he wants it very strongly, he will be promoted as a deputy of Yuri Andropov or Mikhail Gorbachev. After some additional consideration he will smile at these empty dreams, noting that it would be easier for him to become the king of Saudi Arabia or the president of General Motors, than even to have a sincere five-minute chat with the General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party. It seems that under Gorbachev things have changed slightly; but, only the future can confirm the serious character of these changes. But now, these new Party members have entered the almost twenty million numbered segment of Soviet society, which is its skeleton, its keystone, its eyes and ears. These Party members know for sure that despite their professional credentials they will retain their positions under the existing circumstances. They will have many more auspicious chances to receive their own apartment in a newly built house. They will have a free pass to spend one month at the Black Sea Sanatorium and, who knows, the time may come when they will be sent abroad with a Soviet delegation, to Italy and France, and be able to bring back a couple of virgin wool sweaters for their wives and growing up daughters. And as ultimate bliss, one might be sent to India or Syria for two years and save enough money to buy a car and some furniture for his apartment. Of course, very sophisticated and industrious Party members think about a more serious career in the Party apparatus or in their professional area. For they should not hurry to achieve far-reaching goals and turn themselves into a robot that will be used by the Party machine according to its needs and emergencies. In this case, the person has to show much more personal initiative and get along with the ups and downs of the Communist Party's ideological and economic line.

A person who, after complicated proceedings and discussions, ultimately receives his Party card should feel rather lucky since the

honor of joining the organization is not given to everyone. There are restrictions for people with special ethnic origins, criminal or dubious past records, and for those having unreliable relatives. If a person is Jewish or born among the Crimean Tartars who were deported to Central Asia in 1944 and never allowed to return; if he or she had the bad luck to live under the German occupation during World War Two or had been imprisoned by Germans; if such a person took part in the anti-Stalinist Vlasovite army or had been an inmate in a Soviet prison camp; if the candidate's parents belonged to the Russian nobility, or to the family of former Tsarist statesmen or to those great revolutionaries who, like Bukharin or Antonov-Ovseenko, had been persecuted and executed by Stalin; if the person's relatives live abroad: then for all these and many other reasons, as a rule, their passage into the Party gates would be blocked.

In these cases, the person aspiring for membership should be very sincere and open with the Party. If he is Jewish he should hint and stress that he has nothing in common with Zionism and that he by no means approves of the desire some Jews have to leave the socialist country for militant Israel under the false pretext of Jewish nationalism. A person belonging to the Crimean Tartars should elucidate his attitude towards the painful problem of his ethnic origin and let his examiners know that he agrees with the decisions of the Communist Party in its nationality policy and under no circumstances should he mention that he regrets the barbarous deportations of his national minority by the KGB and the deaths of several hundred thousands of his brothers and sisters in this uprooting. If the person happened to live under the German occupation, even when he was a twelve-year-old boy, and his father had been appointed by the German authorities as the elder (*starosta*) of their village, he should frankly admit these facts on several levels of preliminary examination. His frankness must not be necessarily sufficient for giving him the "go-ahead" to membership. In any case, the person should remain a candidate for membership for at least one year, a period which may be easily prolonged, on the one hand, while on the other, the application for membership may be denied without additional explanations. If the person prefers to conceal this criminal fact of his biography, he lives under the constant threat that at the next Party meeting his rivals or personal enemies may raise this question in public and he will again find himself in hot water. If the person had been captured by the Germans and extended his collaboration with the Vlasovite army, only the protection of high Soviet officials and the influence of the KGB (insofar as I am aware from at least one such case) could assist this person to be enlisted in the Communist Party, seriously needed for the further brilliant career. If the person appears to be a relative of leading Soviet revolutionaries, persecuted by Stalin, or

those who served under the Tsarist regime or after the Revolution in 1917, or in later times settled in the West or abroad in general, in such cases also he should "show his social face" and separate himself either from their theoretical position, officially still disapproved of by the Party, or to state that he has nothing in common with his monarchist-minded ancestors or the relatives residing in capitalist countries.

The younger the candidate for Party membership is, and the less sophisticated his world vision, life experience and family and social background, the easier and smoother is his passage into the Party. The entrance into the Party does not seem to be so painful in this case although the consequences of this event may be rather sad. The person is being molded at a very young age and his membership will greatly limit his mental and spiritual development. He or she may develop into a skillful functionary, who cannot exist and work beyond the Party network. There may be other developments in such a personality which we shall touch upon in our discussion below.

The older the person joining the Party happens to be, the more capable he is of keeping his own personality more or less unchanged and of treating his Party membership as something alien to his own character. However, this event almost never occurs without leaving marks on one's personality. One sees that some of his former friends try to stay away from him, while some others begin flirting with him, showing signs of respect and reverence. Perhaps, they think this late arrival into their Party will be tossed upwards, into a more solid and imposing post, and it will not hinder their own career and future promotion if they straighten out their friendly relationships with this new member who is known as a solid scholar or a highly qualified specialist in his field.

In the late 1950's, Moscow orientalists and the scholarly world of the capital city learned with some amazement that Professor Il'ja M. Ošanin, the oldest scholar in Chinese Studies, had joined the Communist Party. Almost everybody in my circle of acquaintances was shrugging his or her shoulders and smiling in dismay, trying to learn what made him enter this rotten body of crooks and scoundrels at his relatively late age. At that time, Il'ja Ošanin was in his mid-sixties and had already published a huge Chinese-Russian dictionary, the fruit of many years of everyday labor. He was the author of other publications and one can imagine that he was on good terms with prominent Russian academicians who tried their best to remain far away from any Party activities, so characterized by *mauvais ton* and plebeian taste. These prominent academicians, including N.I. Konrad, Y.E. Bertels, K.D. Gordlevskij, V.M. Alekseev, I.Y. Kračkovskij (some of them had died by that time) and some other heirs of the most impressive Russian orientalist tradition, were moderately or openly anti-Soviet in their

views, but several decades of persecutions, massacres, crusades against science and scholarship, and in some cases their personal imprisonment, convinced them of the advantages of moderate behavior in public. Under no conditions would these highly esteemed scholars have even weighed or considered the possibility of entering the Communist Party. There is no doubt that each of them would have been embraced and welcomed by the Party officials the moment they would apply for membership.

Undoubtedly, Prof. Il'ja Ošanin foresaw that his old friends who were academicians would not be overjoyed by this news concerning his new affiliations. He could even bet that with some of them his relationships would become rather strained, provided they would still be retained in some shape. But he had his own reasons to seek membership and to cherish the hope that his new status would bring him some advantages that he had failed to obtain despite so many years of self-sacrificial scholarly activity. Being a Doctor of Philological Sciences, a level which is much higher than the North American PhD, he could not achieve his own promotion to the prestigious Academy of Sciences. Probably, he was not sufficiently talented. Many of his colleagues who had abstained from Party membership and had political records which were worse than his own, nevertheless managed long ago to achieve their highest academic titles and the accompanying luxurious apartments on the Lenin Prospect, the summer residences in Moscow's picturesque suburbs, almost unlimited financial funds and, of course, the personal chauffered limousines. Several attempts by Dr. Ošanin to promote himself along this enticing staircase had failed, leaving in him a feeling of undeserved hurt and consternation. He had, however, a big family with an increasing number of grandchildren, and his offspring looked at him with some hope, envisioning him as a fabulous milking cow, offering the immediate satisfaction of all their desires. Enjoying his happy and good humored character, a praiseworthy inheritance from his parents and ancestors belonging to the priestly line of the Russian Orthodox Church, he experienced a kind of fatigue and disappointment in the course of the regular beatings and backbitings, which were almost his ordinary fare for many years of his service.

By no means was he an anti-Semitic person, and he was surrounded by his close and confident Jewish friends, but he was invariably upset when he saw that for an increasing number of Party-ticketed scoundrels and ignoramuses, he was becoming the same whipping-boy as some of his Jewish friends or people of non-Russian origin. There was an obvious injustice in being frequently and rather mercilessly beaten in recurrent ideological battles and crusades, in spite of his being a full-blooded descendant of ethnic Russians for many gen-

erations. Having followed the assurance of his rather cynical friends who were eager to give him their good references for Party membership and having overcome some scruples and pangs of conscience which forbade him this action during the worst and mortally dangerous years, he decided to apply for Party membership in his early sixties. People around him were confused, some rebuked him for silliness and senility, while others tried to perceive his real motivation. The respectable scholar felt too exhausted to play a third-rate role in his academic institution. He no longer wanted to follow the instructions of his own former students, the younger sucklings with "red cards", who presided over their Party sessions and behaved like powers-that-be. In addition to this, the double impact of the Communist reality in "liberated" China, in which he was professionally interested and in the Russia which he served, undoubtedly pressed him to join the Party lest he remain a "white crow" in the midst of the increasing number of scholars and specialists engaged in China. He no longer wanted to remain the whipping boy for recurring ideological offensives. Let them hear him, the son of a priest, while he gives his speech at the overcrowded Party-sponsored public meeting in front of the American Embassy in Moscow and listen as he castigates the shameless Yankee imperialists for their bloody invasion of South Vietnam!

I saw Professor Il'ja Osanin a few minutes before the meeting of the Enlarged Scholarly Council of the Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences, where he was supposed to vote for the expulsion from the Oriental Institute of a scholar who had signed a petition against the renewed repressions in 1968. The old grey-haired man, remembering hundreds of his former colleagues and friends who in the recent decades had been arrested, executed, or starved to death in prison camps, explained without great confusion to his colleagues from the Enlarged Scholarly Council that he had been summoned from a Moscow suburban sanatorium, where he had been spending his time, to participate in this urgent meeting of scholars who were instructed by their chief, Academician Babajan Gafurov, to act as hatchetmen, since the Party Regional Committee preferred at this time to hide behind the backs of these respectable scholars. Professor Il'ja Osanin voted for the expulsion of this scholar and perhaps he was not tortured very much by his conscience for his action. In his early seventies, he had something more important on his mind to ponder. And after so many years of playing a subordinate role in academic circles, he was now able to travel abroad in order to represent the brilliant Soviet sciences and arts and, in one word, to be proud of his own life achievements.

The question "to be or not to be in the Party" pursues the emergent generation and for many people in their twenties and thirties, this problem compels their attention throughout the years. As a matter of

fact, it is the crucial question for a thinking individual's life. The answer to this question determines his whole future: his immediate profession, his ability to go abroad, his family status, for his chance to marry a pretty girl from a "good family" depends upon his going abroad or his being among the *nevyezdnoj* (not being allowed to go abroad). The entire life around him and to a smaller degree around her gravely encourages one to join the Party and to finish ultimately with the cursed question "to be or not to be in the Party". Such a life does not itself offer many choices. In the 1970's, one could choose between emigrating and joining the Party. My wife's student at Moscow University in all seriousness once confided to her that he was squeezed by the need to make up his mind whether to join the religious seminary and become a priest or to join the Communist Party.

Persons might choose between committing suicide or joining the Party, because quite frequently Soviet reality does not provide any meaning for their life, and no stimulus for a cheerful and hopeful existence. There is virtually no alternative and many persons join the Communist Party because everyone else does the same, because it is impossible to resist the temptations and pressures of life, because participation in life is still a kind of life, while staying away from the Party means stifling in a vacuum. In order to stay away from the Party one should acquire a good amount of social immunity, a capacity to exist on one's own resources and talents, an ability to entertain some hope for the future in this life or a faith in the existence of the other world. In some way, to decide against entering the Communist Party is even more difficult than to yield to the temptation to join it. In the full sense of Oscar Wilde's witticism, so far as the joining Party is concerned, "the only way to get rid of temptation is to yield to it". My own daughter, when she was about ten years old, knowing that my own temptations to join the Communist Party subsided for a while, once dropped a phrase which is quite relevant to this case: "Daddy, I think that the non-Party members create their own Party in this country."

For many people, beginning with the privileged classes before the Revolution in 1917, joining the Party was the inaccessible dream. Party membership brings with itself the redemption from sins which this or another person carries on his shoulders as a burden. Needless to say, joining the Party often signifies not only the forgiveness of these sins in the eyes of the surrounding society, but the beginning of a new career as well. A rather striking example of this situation was a story circulated in the 1960's in Moscow circles in connection with Petr Katušev, a prominent Party functionary who became a Secretary of the Party Central Committee and supervised the East-European countries. Petr Katušev, according to this popular story, was born in 1928 into a family of a formerly well-to-do merchant clan. With this origin, the

boy was brought up as a *lisenec*, in other words as a person deprived of a few civil rights enjoyed by non-discriminated-against citizens of that time.[6] The boy never joined the young pioneer organization which as a rule recruits all schoolboys and schoolgirls. In his teens, the boy was not allowed even to join the Young Communist League which usually opens its gates for almost everyone without any discrimination. After having graduated from high school, the boy was accepted as a student by the Moscow Higher Technical School, named after Bauman, where he received the proper education needed to enter the military field connected with the design of new tanks. In the short period after the start of his professional activity in the Gorky Plant, the young Petr Katuševv, as a member of a larger team, succeeded in building an excellent new tank, which turned out to be so exceedingly attractive that it received the praises of Joseph Stalin who even in the last months of his long life was unable to tame his enthusiasm for new military equipment and techniques. Needless to say, the young Katuševv had been trying to make up for his shameful and regrettably affluent ancestry, from which he had not benefited even by a single broken kopek. And he was immensely proud to be personally introduced to Comrade Joseph Stalin as a leading and promising designer of advanced military equipment aimed at defending the socialist motherland from imperialist aggressors. Comrade Stalin liked the young Petr Katuševv whose manners during the audience were characterized by timidity, combined with the eagerness to serve his country's interests.

"I would like to ask you Comrade Katuševv", Comrade Stalin began in his usual heavily accented Russian, "are you a member of our glorious Communist Party?"

Comrade Petr Katuševv, in his mid-twenties, did not at all expect to hear this painful question from the people's genius. In front of his "father and teacher", he was unable to cherish any schemes of connivance and with deep-hearted candidness, with the obvious turmoil that reflected his suffering, the profoundly patriotic Russian and Soviet heart, Petr Katuševv, a descendant of the affluent exploiting classes, opened his unhappy past and his unquenchable pangs to the one who knew everything. Taking for a moment his pipe out of his mouth and filling up the spacious room with the aroma of his tobacco, Comrade Stalin asked the young man in his deepest Georgian accent:

"Tell me please, Comrade Katuševv, would you like to be a member of the Communist Party?"

With tears in his eyes, Petr Katuševv confessed to his "Father and Teacher", that this has been his dream for many years. Joseph Vissarionovič did not take long to respond to the young tank builder:

"If so, Comrade Katuševv, you may consider yourself a member of our glorious Communist Party."

In defiance of all the regulations prescribed by the Charter of the Communist Party which demanded that a new member can be adopted only by his primary Party organization, Comrade Katušev's membership was confirmed within the next few hours and he received his own Party card on the same day.

The subsequent career of Petr Katušev was extraordinary, unprecedented, and somewhat confounding. In a few years he became the first secretary of the Gorky Party Committee and was shortly after promoted by Nikita Khrushchev to the responsible position of being a Secretary of the Central Committee. He took an exceptional role in the suppression of "the Prague Spring", but in the 1970's this young and efficient Party leader was removed from the Central Party apparatus for somewhat mysterious reasons, which does not signify that his prominent government career failed once and for all.

In my twenties, which coincided with the decade of Stalin's death, many of my own friends and acquaintances were disturbed by the doubt of whether to join the Party or to remain outside of its ranks. In the close circle of my highschool friends, even the idea of joining the Communist Party seemed utterly senseless and incompatible with our human dignity. Among my college friends and the people with whom I worked and studied in the years after graduating from the Moscow Oriental Institute, the thought of joining the Communist Party became much more connected with everyday life and its needs. A veteran of war, Aleksej Astrejin, had a twofold goal for his life: to join the Party and then to squeeze into the KGB. This person had very little humanity in himself and he readily volunteered to be a hatchetman whenever this function was needed by the ever-vigilant Party organization. He served in this unenviable function with such passion that other members of the Communist Party's primary organization came to be afraid of his activities and, when it was possible, they tried to put the brakes on his desire to become a member. At any rate, after having damaged the reputation of several decent classmates, he squeezed himself into the Party, crawled into his enchanting KGB and married a daughter of Deputy Attorney General, A.A. Mal'jarov, who later dealt with Andrei Sakharov and Alexander Solzhenitsyn. Aleksej Astrejin seemed to have made an average career, but I never saw a happy expression on his face.

My close friend and classmate, Viktor Belukov, was also a war veteran. He was a handsome, smart, mustached young man who tended to flirt with pretty young ladies, was fond of spending his time in cafes and restaurants, but not always able to meet even the extremely lenient demands imposed by the curriculum upon the students. Neither was he very much involved in the social activities which were popular in the college and constituted the only visible signs of life budding in it.

Viktor Belukov was a kind-hearted man, alien to any shade of envy or hatred for people. Having been thrown into the hell of war while only eighteen, he never ceased to wonder how many a time the cruel battles had spared him and he thought that the only way to pay back his fate for its generosity was to have a good time as frequently as possible. The majority of his friends with whom he shared his leisure in drinking booze and chasing girls, were long-time Party members, and in his concluding years of college studies, which he could hardly cope with, they began to persuade him that his own membership in the Communist Party would by no means make him swerve from his ordinary routine. He applied for Party membership, and more than once, but to his great amazement, his application was rejected every time with excuses that he found ludicrous and hypocritical. He was quite convinced that his four-year participation in the war had provided him with the most reliable affidavit of his fidelity to the country's interests. But those on whom the decision depended had something else on their mind, and the kind-hearted young man, passed away in a few years, without being able to find his own place in the society for whose future he had poured out his blood. When he died, he was in his early thirties. Perhaps, if he had been welcomed to the Communist Party, he would have lingered much longer. Party membership might have prevented him from indulging in redeeming, self-oblivious drinking. But it is absolutely certain that his character would have changed radically so that the image of my untimely deceased friend would not have, perhaps, remained so caressing, affectionate, and immeasurably radiant.

In those years, I had another friend, S., whose personality combined more intelligence, wit and unbridled contempt towards the totalitarian system camouflaged under the beautiful word "socialism", than I have found in any other person. In his teens and twenties he managed to adapt to the Soviet system. He understood well what the monstrous state demanded from its citizens, but he saw no possibility for his own individuality to develop and thrive in such a society. I owe him a great deal for my better understanding of that society; the hours I spent in his house, among his parents and his wife will be remembered by me as a landmark in my Odyssey in the Soviet labyrinth and its unrivalled complexities. Until very late, S. did not join the Young Communist League and without this membership he risked receiving no job at all after graduating from college. By no means was he a brilliant student. His forte was the world of arts, *belles lettres*, painting and architecture. What he could never properly study was the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism and the history of the Communist Party. Every time he drilled its history and the Party's "historic" congresses, he was ready to exclaim like Julio Jurenito in Ilya Ehrenburg's novel: "London Congress, Stockholm Congress. Oh Most Saintly Mother of God, save

me and have mercy upon me!"[7] The exams in Marxism-Leninism, repeated each year, took years off his life, because he was forced to repeat to the examiners whom he despised, the nonsense which he never believed and always mocked. He was forced to blame Trotsky and Bukharin while he was convinced that it was Stalin who had lied without any limits and killed others without mercy. From the examination room, he reappeared blushing like a peeled pomegranate, and in Marxism-Leninism he never received higher than a "C". He married a young lady from a Communist Party family and to justify his marriage, this descendant of Russian nobility confided to his friends: "She will not allow me to open my mouth!" Until some moment in his life, he reminded me of the "superfluous" man in classical Russian literature.

He could not boast of an exceedingly happy marriage, but at least his dazzling anti-Soviet rhetoric did not too often pass the threshold of his apartment. But he did not want to die or to end his days in a Soviet prison camp. He joined the Young Communist League, and his parents used their rich connections in the world of journalism to find him a well-paid job in a central Moscow newspaper. His new colleagues, during their lunches and especially amidst drunken orgies, did not demonstrate any substantial differences in their views of Soviet foreign and internal policies, although their regular publications, read by millions in the country, never deviated from the prescribed, official party line. S. was loved by his colleagues for his discretion and intelligence, as well as for his discernment of what was allowed to be discussed confidentially and what had to be published in the official press. But one thing was implicitly asked from S., and after a while it became perfectly clear that without joining the Party he would never obtain any promotion and even place his current position in jeopardy.

Everything seemed nice and comfortable, and his wife was looking forward to see her husband with a Party ticket. His mother, on the other hand, had never seen a Party member in her own household, but what could one do? Without Party membership, her son could not go far in his job. S. himself thought that the sooner he would join the Party, the better he would serve his office and his country. Many people around him had already obtained their Party cards and there was visibly nothing exceedingly wrong in their behavior. Their glances might have lost some clarity, and they started to drink a little more heavily than before, although now they were drinking with less talk on dangerous subjects. Some of his friends let him know that they would get along with this new step in his life. Other friends were positively dumbfounded when they heard about his intention. S. felt that he would meet these less frequently than before, but after a while they would get accustomed to it. While brooding over his Party, he found it

most probable that this would give a favorable quality to his life, although he could not dismiss the idea that he was going to make an incredibly hazardous mess for himself. How could he, with his deeply rooted hatred towards the Soviet system and its damned Party, and after his painful experience with those cursed examinations, now enter the den of the ideological gangsters who had destroyed whatever remained of classical Russia? Was he not planning to commit a tremendous offense against himself and his own soul by joining this criminal body consisting of the blind and the lame? How would he, in the future, read his favorite Gogol and the burning Dostoyevsky, not to mention Plato, Dante and Cervantes? For so many years, he lived hating those who had killed the Tsar, his wife, their five children, and many of his relatives who were fighting on the White Guardians' side against the Red Army! For so many months, he had hated those executioners who had been bathing their hands in the blood of millions of naive-minded Communists in the 1930's and later on, but now, by his own will and consent, he was going to enter that gang of torturers!

He was unable to cope with these thoughts which were falling upon him like an avalanche. He felt that neither his mother nor his dear wife could help him solve these heart-breaking problems. What he wanted was a good drink in a fashionable place, with his old friend or the pretty girl, who had fallen recently in love with him. On one of those evenings, he took part in a riotous party and ended the night in a wild brawl with fist fights and scandalous screaming. For this, he was immediately fired from his job and lost his opportunity to join the Party ranks. For several months, S. did not work and his father attempted to use his first-rate relationships in the world of letters in order to reach Mikhail Sholokhov himself, with the request to help his temperamental son resume his functions as an editor. The operation to reach a celebrity such as Sholokhov took a lot of time, for it was necessary to calculate the time when the world-renowned author happened to be in Moscow, away from his Don *stanica* Veshenskaya, and incidentally, in a sober enough state to understand what was addressed to him. But the plan to reach Sholokhov showed the genius of S.'s parents. After many rounds of telephone conversations and diplomatic activities through Sholokhov's aides, the great author ultimately grasped the request on behalf of the young S. and placed a personal call to the chief editor of the newspaper, with whom he happened to have spent a couple of days during the Second World War. The boss of the newspaper went mad with joy that this great writer bestowed upon him a personal telephone call and a ten-minute conversation about the glorious time they had way back during the war. Of course, S. was restored to his editorship with appropriate admonitions, but the proceedings to enlist him in the Party were naturally put off.

After a few years it was still quite difficult for him to enter the Party. His scandal was not entirely forgotten and there were, of course, people who did not like him and tried to place sticks into his wheels. To a certain degree, he was glad that his application was postponed, but he still kept to his decision. Nevertheless, every time he seemed to reach the goal, this or another hindrance blocked his way and postponed his long-awaited union with the Party. After several rounds of new attempts, he succeeded ultimately in being awarded the Party card. By that moment, crucial changes occurred in his life and he had divorced his former wife and remarried. However, I was unable to observe any changes in his character, for our friendship came to an end, and until now, I cannot state unambiguously, whether he tended to avoid my company with its now unnecessary discussions of Soviet life and its ridiculous facets, or whether it was rather myself who lost any interest in continuing my relationships with him. Perhaps both of these reasons may account for our irreversible and unavoidable separation.

An even more dramatic story occurred with Nikolaj Golubkov who was my best friend in my teenage years and in our twenties. He was two years older than myself and from 1943 until the early 1960's, we felt for each other what should be called a real, warm-hearted friendship. There was hardly any aspect of my developing personality that was not influenced by him. His interests towards literature and the arts were overwhelming. He was as handsome as Apollo and was interested in spiritual things. In the dark times of Stalin's despotism, we discussed for hours until midnight the various aspects of our life - world poetry, philosophy and the shadowy facets of Soviet policy. Being half-Latvian, and often visiting the Baltic land of his ancestors, he knew from first-hand sources about the happy life that the Soviet regime brought to the Baltic nations, and at the early stage of my educational voyage, I was unable to resist his eloquence, humanism and truth-seeking. His literary gifts transcended the limits of our meager imaginations and he could have been the Pushkin of our milieu and his religious, although frequently concealed, world vision sounded as noble-minded and deep-rooted as that poet's. Like S., whom he never even knew, he abstained from membership in the Young Communist League, but in the long run convinced himself while still a graduate of his college, that he should render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. He became a Young Communist League member, which did not mean that he made any lifelong commitment, and a shadow of darkness saddened his existence. In his own words at that time, by having become a member of the League, he had committed the worst villainy of his life.

Nominally, he was a Russian, and with his knowledge of foreign languages, he was cordially invited by his ideological superiors to accompany some prominent pro-Communist luminaries, including

Pablo Neruda during their visit to the country of firmly built socialism and to serve as their interpreter. Hence during his translations of their pathetic and optimistic speeches, he found himself immersed in luxurious hotels, magnificent banquets and extensive trips throughout the country. Later, after Stalin's death, he went abroad for two years. Nobody could resist the temptation to spend at least two years in a capitalist country with a sensible salary in a luxurious apartment. However, he was supposed to have a spouse in order to be given the final official approval, and so he married a very nice lady, for whom he showed no great visible affection. By the way, in the time of his close co-operation with foreign dignitaries and the long sojourn abroad, our friendship used to reach its low tide. Once, when he, well-fed and elegantly dressed, revisited his native Moscow from his blissful, although temporary foreign residence, there were a number of eye-catching differences in our opinions where he had hardly disagreed at any earlier time. But who does not argue with his friends? Who does not deviate?

After Nikolaj returned home from abroad, one could discern in his behavior a number of certain bizarre or officially unconventional colors. He quit his highly privileged and well-paid job and aspired to continue his education but during his entrance examinations in 1957, he failed the exam on Marxist-Leninist philosophy. However, he felt no despair. From time to time he went to a market to sell some of his good clothing and expensive books which he had purchased while abroad. His family commitments were reduced to a minimum and his needs became minimal. His interests were confined to the Hindu philosophy, Yoga, and sporadically to the Christian religion. He did not work anywhere for almost four years and ultimately the police began expressing an interest in his sources of income.

At this concluding stage of our friendship, which developed throughout the late 1950's, Nikolaj was passionately awaiting the time when the Soviet Empire would begin to fall apart. I did not believe that the Empire would perish so rapidly and qualified Nikolaj's impatient and unreliable expectations as wishful thinking, although after the Hungarian Revolt of 1956 and its cruel suppression, I reached the conclusion that my spiritual aspirations were in an irreconcilable clash with the existing Soviet environment. If there would have been any revolution in Russia in those days, without any overstatement, I would have participated in its forward barricades. Nikolaj was deeply immersed in Yoga and its *asanas* and the repeated meditation helped him restore his inner peace. By that time his wife gave up any hope for her husband to surface and return to the society as its ordinary and unchallenging citizen.

At that time, Nikolaj looked back at his sojourn abroad with con-

sternation and regret. He used to repeat that for a thoughtful and intelligent Russian any experience of going abroad would lead to a self-inflicted trauma. Sometimes it seemed to me that at that period, he had a healthy feeling of envy towards my lack of any experience with travel outside of Russia. At that time, the only travel abroad that I envisaged day and night was my highly risky swim from a border city, Batumi, across the scrupulously watched Black Sea strip to the adjacent Turkey. The pressing desire to cross the Finnish border on skis did not seem any more rewarding, for even in the case of success, and its chances were remote, the Finns, with their vowed loyalty to the Kremlin, would have returned a runaway serf back into the hands of his landowner. Nikolaj knew about these intentions of mine. He supported me in my thoughts and generously proposed assistance, like providing me with his costly waterproof wristwatch, but he never expressed any desire to accompany me in my prospective journey across the border straight into the womb of a Soviet prison camp. But of one thing I was positively sure: he would never denounce my intentions to the Soviet secret police.

Never before had he expressed any intention to join the ranks of the Communist Party. After the stimulating 20th Party Congress in 1956, one of our friends was longing for community and camaraderie and, while being slightly loaded, astonished each of us by his heart's desire to enroll in the Party ranks, for he said it was a healing emotion to feel at least six million Party members standing side by side with and behind him. Totally amazed, Nikolaj responded brilliantly at once: "Six million crooks and scoundrels, who will be your comrades-in-arms!"

The one who dreamt about the Party membership was appropriately pacified by this remark, although he did not drop his long-nourished intention. In the 1960's, he joined the Party, although never more advertised his desire to be on intimate terms with millions.

It was around 1957 that Nikolaj repeatedly and confidentially stated his Christian credo in my presence, and I was quite impressed by his words. Several months later, after his failure to become a PhD graduate under his advisor Professor Roman Samarin, an ill-reputed cut-throat in the field of scholarship, we were sitting on a bench along the Tverskoi boulevard and continued our confidential debates concerning the immediate future of the society, and its life which we found increasingly murky and bleak. At one of those never to be forgotten moments, while looking at the still green foliage of the beautiful garden tree, with a heart-breaking sadness in his voice, Nikolaj said: "You know, now I would like to be crucified, like Jesus Christ, with my love for people." It was a moment of deep sadness. How could I help this man, a friend of mine, who was ready to sacrifice himself for mankind? Besides Jesus Christ, my friend lived under the spell of Mahatma

Gandhi and shared his philosophy of *ahimsa* or non-violence. However, even at those moments, I distinctly discerned in my heart and mind a tiny note of distrust towards his resolution.

But one may not be buried or concealed in Russia tracelessly, and the police warned him repeatedly. I wondered what would happen to a person who had not been engaged in any official work for more than three years. At that time, the laws concerning parasitism were not yet declared. Something terrible was happening to my friend beginning with 1960. There were some important events in his life, about which I still have no clues. He was mobilized into the army, promoted to lieutenant and began to pack up for Cuba. Meeting him much more rarely and under increasing strain, I observed in him a kind of relief: to leave for Cuba as a military interpreter seemed to him much better than to do nothing or to be punished for years of idleness. There was some sort of stern expression on his face and he disclosed to me that he had been offered membership in the Communist Party as the condition for being sent to Cuba for a year. I could not believe my own ears! What have we been talking about for years! Who said in our private circle that it would be crazy to join "those six million crooks and scoundrels"! Of course, in contrast to the anticipations, the Soviet system did not fall apart. By the way, after so many years of experience, I hardly believe that it will go to pieces in the months or years to come, unless a miracle takes place. My friend was looking at me with eyes in which I could read his fatigue, alienation and some desire to join the Soviet community and to discontinue his existence as a scarecrow and a weirdo. I was not in any position to blame him for this intention.

But I could not help being amazed and wounded by his utterances at this time. His words about love were cynical and filthy. Never before had he said anything of that kind. At that time, I myself came to the Christian outlook and I reminded him of his recent views. He looked at me with a strange glance and said: "Don't you think, that it is time to unsheathe our sword and see whether it is covered with too much rust?" There was little left to discuss between us.

Two years later, when I met him after his return from Cuba, with a Party card kept on his chest, I tried to inquire about the life in "socialist" Cuba. But instead of answering my questions, he was talking about the charming Cuban girls and the pleasures they bestow upon those who sleep with them.

Five years later, during the time of our great social excitement, when Solzhenitsyn's books, Galich's songs and other revelations were on our minds and in our hearts, I met him accidentally in a stadium. He brought me to my home in his own car and we tried to talk. There was emptiness and misunderstanding. In April 1972, a few days before my departure from Russia, we had our farewell meeting. I could not help

thinking how in his own words, on his way back from Cuba, their plane made a stopover in Canada and he thought about defecting. But now everything had changed. He was satisfied with his life. He had his job and Party meetings. He had his car and weekend trips to the suburbs of Moscow with a friend who was another Party member. They were fishing there, talking, and from time to time consuming a bottle of Moldavian wine or something more Russian and stronger. But there was little trace of the spiritual inspiration that had made us friends years ago. All attempts to create literary pieces and stories had been dropped forever. There remained the bleak, expressionless look in his eyes and on his face which intimidated me. I could not believe that it was the same face which I had so much loved. Its expression was more frightening than those of my open adversaries. But it was in vain that I looked into his eyes for any semblance of friendship and love. He was not a fool. He repeated once again the phrase that abroad I would die of nostalgia and when I thought how that system had turned one of the potentially best people in the world into an exhausted, cynical robot, his words enraged me. He had reasons to dislike me. He understood that I came to say farewell to our youth, and our friendship, which at some time was pure and fresh like morning dew. But he understood also that the meeting itself reminded us of our frustrated dreams, hopes and beliefs. His Party membership had separated us and it did not make him happy in any way. He was an aged, exhausted man without his own family, and without good friends. Twenty-five years earlier, in the time of Stalin's cruel despotism, we trusted each other and neither of us was imprisoned because of our conversations. There had been no stool-pigeon among us. But now he did not like me and I did not trust him; even now when people are not frequently arrested merely for talking in their narrow circle. When we were parting, we shook hands and did not even embrace each other, knowing that we would never meet again. In the Fall of 1982, Nikolaj died after a routine surgery on his appendix.

Since I myself was a part of Soviet society until 1968, and closely involved in the thoughts regarding Party membership, it will be worthwhile to add several words about my own personal experience. My youth was to a certain extent connected with the ideals of the Young Communist League, although since I was fifteen I passionately disliked Joseph Stalin. However, until 1950, I was quite near the idea of joining the Communist Party. Perhaps, the landmark in my life was a closed Party meeting in May 1950, when after a difficult and time-consuming year of work as a Young Communist League secretary in my Oriental Institute's Department, I was officially accused by our late Communist Party Secretary for having introduced an "anti-Party line" into my Komsomol activities. I was shocked by this accusation,

although now I tend to agree with it, for I worked as a Secretary of the Young Communist League branch without any co-operation with the Party Secretary, Professor Konstantin Usmanov. Together with the above mentioned Aleksej Astrejin, who would join the KGB ranks later on, Professor Usmanov had reasons to doubt my devotion to the Party, especially during the time of anti-Jewish repressions and discrimination. As of the time these accusations were announced I had serious doubts whether I should obtain Party membership at all. I had a very vague idea about these allegations and my supervisors in the Young Communist League laughed at them, but I knew that they would bring me serious difficulties, if I decided to join the Party. However, until today, it is difficult for me to know what was behind these accusations, which could have easily sent me upon my road to a prison camp.

A year later, my chiefs in the Young Communist League said that I could apply for Party membership. With my Jewish background and many doubts in my heart, I thought that it would be wiser for a while to stay away from the Party. When I started my work in the Moscow Publishing House of Foreign Dictionaries, especially a year and a half after Stalin's death, some new considerations made me think that I could apply for membership. At that time, I was twenty-four years old and it seemed that with Stalin's demise, new trends began to dominate the country, and although still in a hidden way, Stalin was dethroned by the Party throughout the country. The procedure of receiving the recommendation from the Young Communist League took at least several months, and by the time my application for the membership reached the Party Organization, there appeared some serious cracks in my first and short-lived matrimonial union. When the Publishing House's Primary Party Bureau considered my application, the question of my matrimonial status was immediately raised. I was shocked. I did not expect that they would poke their noses even into my relationship with my civil spouse. The subsequent investigation created such a turmoil in my heart, that when the Party Bureau informed me that I could go ahead with my application for the Party membership, I never dared to do that. By that time, I came to the decision that I would live without Party membership, whatever else might happen to me. Almost thirty years after those events, I still have a positive feeling of shame and repentance for having applied for the membership. My intention to join the Party was determined not only by my desire to join the Party community and to feel myself less isolated in society, but without doubt, by the considerations that I would be able to establish myself in society.

Sometimes I used to sit late into the evening in my office and hear that just behind the wall several dozen of our editors met together for their regular Party meeting. Until now I recall that feeling of nostalgia

for the community of idea-inspired people and for some great secrets concealed in the Party activities. On those occasions, while hearing through the wall certain vague words, many of which were audible, but not distinct enough, I felt sad, lonely, and embarrassed that I was not sitting with those colleagues who shared the enviable fortune of being entitled Party members.

In the depth of my soul, I should offer thanks to my own fate, that despite the long pressure of life in the Soviet Union I succeeded in remaining outside of the Party organization. I have few doubts that my life would have flowed amidst utterly different shores if I would have ever joined the Party. Perhaps, my life would have been much more tragic and short. I have to say that my decision to stay away from the Party had saddened my mother quite often. She wanted me to be like others and the majority of them were marching in a straightforward manner into the Party's wide gates. Until I was blacklisted in 1968, the question of my Party membership had never been entirely ignored and, time and again, while carrying on my research at the Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences, my superiors and advisors gave me loaded hints that it would be in my best interests to change my attitude towards Party membership. Besides the promotion in the Institute itself, it was obviously clear to me that they would never allow me, a non-Party member, to go abroad to India or to the Western countries in order to participate there in scholarly life. But since the mid-1950's, especially after the Hungarian uprising of 1956, the mere idea of joining the Party ranks made a chill run up and down my spine.

Perhaps, the last remnant of my own longing for Party membership should be dated to March, 1956, when together with other colleagues in the Publishing House, I was listening to the content of Khrushchev's speech about Stalin at the Twentieth Party Congress. Dozens of millions of Soviets were urged to listen to that morbid account of Stalin's crimes. I could not believe that now from the Party forum I was hearing the same words and phrases which had been uttered in our friendly circle during the later 1940's. After the end of the open Party meeting, I was returning home through Gorky Park together with an acquaintance of mine, P.K. We had known each other since our college days and, as we were walking in the dark along the Moscow river, I said to him: "To tell you frankly, I was so impressed by Khrushchev's account of the crimes committed by Stalin, that I am prepared to look once more into the possibility of joining the Party." "I agree with you, Yuri", answered my friend who had already become a Party member. "So far as I am concerned, I am moved by Khrushchev's letter to the extent that I would like to realize my youth's dream to work in the KGB." I don not remember my response to him, but I had the clear thought after his remark that if Khrushchev's speech

about Stalin's cannibalism could create such desires in my acquaintance, it would be wise and reasonable for myself to give up totally any desire of joining this strange body of uniformly minded people.

After the Hungarian uprising in 1956, all my thoughts developed in one direction only: to stay as far away from the Party as possible. And one final illustration may be needed to show how seriously Soviet families take this problem of Party membership.

In the large clan of my own relatives, with whom I met more and more rarely in the late 1950's, after which I avoided them almost entirely, the problems of Party membership were naturally discussed during the ceremonies attracting the whole clan of families. Beside marriages, the ceremony which attracted a great number of relatives is, of course, a funeral. Around 1958, one of my intelligent uncles, who was extremely critical about the Soviet system, died and I was asked to deliver a eulogy over his coffin. After the funeral, we got together in the house of our great-grandmother, who was in her late seventies, and the usual ceremony of eating and drinking began within a narrow circle of our relatives. Gradually, they started to discuss various aspects of their own lives. At the head of the table sat my uncle, whom I loved very much in my early teens, but whom I saw less and less frequently afterwards. He had been a Party member since his youth and in the 1930's he worked with many prominent Bolsheviks who were later slain by Stalin. He had not made a big career for himself, but he was smart enough to disappear from big cities in the heat of the bloody terror and in 1940 he returned to Moscow. By no means was he a bad person, but he was rather narrow-minded and proud of his Party membership. Having not seen me for a while, he considered it quite appropriate during dinner and in the presence of my other relatives to say the following: "Yuri, I did know about some of your intentions, but as you see I have not hurt you!"

I was dumbfounded by his admonition and self-complacency. Perhaps my mother had divulged to him that I was planning to escape from the country. In reality, I had been obsessed with the idea after the Soviet tanks had rolled into Budapest over the bodies of young Hungarians. I interpreted his remark as self-congratulation for not having denounced his nephew to the secret police. In Stalin's time, my fatal steps and imprisonment could have affected his career, but in Khrushchev's reign, his fear indicated his paranoia. I was not happy with his remark and self-praise. But perhaps, he used this enlarged family gathering in order to give me a few sensible counsels. Continuing his own discourse, he mentioned that he had urged his own son, who was much younger than myself, to join the Communist Party. Although, in his own words, his son was not extremely happy to be in

the Party, nevertheless, it was a good idea to urge him to make this step. My Party-ticketed cousin was not present at this gathering. He was fond of motorcycling and I was quite amazed that with no wide social vision, this young man had enlisted himself into the Party. But my uncle had devised his own strategem and ultimately hit the point: "I think, Yuri, that it is high time for you to join the Party. You have had good credentials in the Young Communist League activities and it will be prudent of you to reconsider some of your attitudes."

I thought that it was impossible for me to avoid his attack and in my impassioned indignation I responded: "You are much older than myself, uncle A. You know that in my childhood I loved you. Years pass by and the life around us becomes understood a little bit better. I am afraid I am not in a position to follow your advice as blindly as I could have done it twenty or even ten years ago. More that anyone else, you know from your own experience what was going on in those cruel thirties, when streams of blood covered up the whole country. You should not be told who was responsible for those massacres. You personally were saved by nothing less than a miracle; and now, when the time has come to reconsider our past and our bloody lessons, not only are you unable to do that, but you are proud for having made your own son unhappy by forcing him to enter that bloody den of fools and bandits. Not only that, but after not having seen me for years, you praise yourself for not denouncing me and now you have the guts to advise me to enter this gang!"

My poor uncle did not say anything and touched his heart with his right hand. Some of my other relatives supported me and others kept silent. My uncle soon wanted to walk out. He had always been proud of me for my success in studies, but since that funeral we have virtually not seen each other. I think that I was rather cruel towards him in the impulsiveness of my youth.

Even now I feel remorse and almost shock while narrating this tiny episode from my relationships with my kin. At the present moment, I would prefer to have dealt more politely with my Soviet countrymen, even while knowing that they are Party people, although I would like to retain truth in combination with objectivity and impartiality. No doubt my desire to deal less harshly with Party people reflects my long experience of Western life. No doubt, some readers will find my description too extreme and unjust, but I can do very little with the general trend of Western intellectual life, influenced as it is by the vision of the capitalist society's vices, by the mighty traditions of Western free-thought and social democracy, and of course unequivocally by the immense machinery of open and especially concealed Soviet disinformation.

Reflecting on the phenomenon of joining the Party in general, one

should unambiguously say that for a would-be Party member, this is almost never a simple act of conscience. As a rule, a person joins the Party while he is still in his late twenties and quite often he makes this decision in his mid-twenties and later on, so that this decision is connected with at least two years of bureaucratic procedures which require one year to be spent by the applicant as a candidate for Party membership. These years are almost always accompanied by soul-searching, and regular talks with friends, relatives and colleagues. The person seeking to make up his or her mind should weigh the various aspects of life, his or her own abilities, inclinations and ambitions. In whatever city or village one lives or studies, it is impossible to turn a blind eye to the life around one. He or she sees workers and peasants living under horrid physical, spiritual, and ethical conditions, and one cannot ignore the negative attitude or the general indifference of ordinary people towards the Party and its members. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of remarks about the Party which one recalls as made by his good friends and senior people, whom he respects. There are, of course, many suggestions and advice, like those made by my uncle, but these are never really very sincere. They are made more out of the duty of a self-cheating Party member in order to recruit as many people as possible to the Party body, to which he belongs and where he himself is very unhappy. And almost invariably, in each family clan there are those who defy these dry and insincere statements.

There also exist those who take their initital steps toward Party membership, and the Party still tries not to recruit them but, unless they are incorrigible blockheads and silly idiots, they are aware that Party membership demands something more than they are able or willing to give back to it. The majority of people in Russia are still brought up in the country and in families where the influence of their religious babushkas and even parents can be clearly detected. In whatever collective this or another person has been brought forth and moulded, he has an almost definite idea about the soul, its prerogatives in life and the general concept of human integrity and social respectability. Whatever his reasoning might be, he accomplishes a *coup de force* against the suggestions and revulsions of his own conscience. In classical terms, he makes the deliberate choice of what his inner voice sees as evil. By vowing, during the complicated procedure of preparation for membership to "lead an irreconcilable struggle ... with religious prejudices and other survivals of the past"[8], he solemnly promises to separate himself off from his religious and spiritual heritage, by which humanity lived for at least twenty centuries. By making an oath "to lead the irreconcilable struggle against any manifestations of bourgeois ideology, against the remnants of private-

property-based psychology", the person separates himself from humanity and embarks upon his way with behavioral and psychological implications which are beyond the control of his conscience and will. Apparently, he makes a deal by which his or her own soul and family commitments are deposited to a pawnbroker. Whether the person is aware of this explicitly or subconsciously, he tries to stifle and suppress it. Thus, in each case of the initial proceedings involved in the application for Party membership, the deal between Faust and Mephistopheles, with regard to the sale of the soul, is negotiated, signed, and perpetually sealed. As the late Alexander Galich wrote, the devil is visibly present in the deal and suggests that instead of ink, the signature be made in blood.[9]

After signing this agreement, the person receives his red ticket or, as people say, his bread-card, knowing that now, he will be able to receive a lot of material privileges - the bread and butter, and, in the case of senior officials, caviar and salmon, even in the time of famine. By this signature, he throws himself head first into the abyss, but he still relies upon some miracle of collective support. He bows to the devil but he is promised all the kingdoms of the world and their glory as a reward. The three temptations of Jesus Christ are more than mere abstractions: "stones become loaves of bread", "throw yourself down for it is written that 'He will give his angels charge over you'", and the devil's final words to Jesus from a very high mountain are: "All these things will I give to you, if you will fall down and worship me!" These three temptations, about which the Grand Inquisitor in Dostoevsky's masterpiece so brilliantly discourses, are the essence of what is going on. For this reason, it is prohibited for members to be engaged in any religious pursuit, and once the surgery over their souls is accomplished, each member may enter his new life and begin his new existence.

CHAPTER TWO

The Top Hierarchy of Party Members

Having obtained Party membership, the members continue their voyage on the ocean of Soviet life. One cannot say that even with this newly acquired Party membership, one can reach the peak of even appropriately privileged social positions. With Party membership, the new arrivals are absolutely, and especially theoretically, in accordance with the Consitution of the Party in which it is written that all Party members are equal, although it is still true that some are more equal than others.

Somehow, after the future life in the other world is excluded as something non-existent, the marathon on the highways, roads and paths of Soviet life begins. People continue their previous job or apply for new positions, and there are good chances that they will receive them, if they are not Jewish or Crimean Tartars, or if their ethnic origin is essentially Russian, without too much noble blood in the veins of their forefathers, and if they themselves or their close relatives have not been confined to prisons or prison camps, recently or even in Stalin's time, for crimes against the state and the Party. Without doubt, amnesty was given to many inmates in Stalin's prison camps and torture cells, but nevertheless in each Personnel Department, an indispensable office in each social institution, it is still well-known by its taciturn and resilient clerks who work hand in hand with the KGB, that despite the historic resolutions of various Party Congresses, the wise Stalin never punished his victims without any fault of their own. The new members of the Party may show their efficiency and deserve a chance to be sent to higher Party schools, where they will be trained for the well-rewarded field of state security and internal affairs or even for the judiciary area, where judges and prosecutors should be recruited from reliable people only. If they are to be trained as diplomats and spies, there will be no serious obstacles in promoting themselves to positions requiring service abroad. Soviet society needs its own trustworthy people all over the world. In the Soviet embassy in Paris, for example, the number of personnel is ten times greater than the number of Frenchmen working in their own embassy in Moscow. Trusted Soviet patriots are needed everywhere, in Washington and Ottawa, in Angola and Nicaragua, in Chile and Australia. Too many light-minded people, without properly "understanding" the meaning of their treacherous actions, are "seduced" by the abundance of consumer goods and accessible brothels, betray the interests of the first socialist state and defect to capitalist countries. Naturally, the people who are sent abroad by this important and

responsible society should be well-trained as Party members, and their family relationships, especially, should be great examples of solidity.

As a rule, non-Party members should be immediately rejected for service abroad due to the seriousness of the job. The new Party members may continue their important Party job in their organizations and, if they are efficient, understanding, flexibile and able to work with other people and handle matters in accordance with new Party instructions and decisions, then they will have a very good chance of being promoted to the higher echelons of the Party, to the city or regional Party Committee, and maybe even higher, to the center of Soviet life, the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Moscow.

When we try to subdivide all Party members according to their positions in the Party, their enthusiasm in developing its "progressive and revolutionary cause" and the interrelationships between their Party membership and their main profession or the real vocation, we must differentiate at least three main levels, with some further subdivisions.

At the top of the social hierarchy we will identify the most active, visible and dedicated layer of the society which is titled the *nomenklatura*. This is the most privileged group in the society and should be subdivided into two main subdivisions, the properly called Party *nomenklatura* and the *nomenklatura*, which consists of professionals in various branches of the Soviet society, in its army, economics, technical and humanitarian sciences and arts.

The second big group should be qualified as a solid and widely spread middle-level Party layer, which includes many thousands of specialists in various branches of economics, sciences and arts, who are the main pushers and organizers in all of these professional areas. They enjoy relatively high salaries and various privileges, but they have not been promoted to the above-mentioned *nomenklatura*, although many of them have a good chance for that after years of successful work in their field and devotion to the Party cause and its principles.

Finally, there is the ground layer of Party members, which constitutes the majority of the Party throughout the country. In this stratum, we should identify the foundation, which embraces many millions of Party members and these serve as the eyes, ears, and hands of the Communist Party itself. Although the whole mechanism is wound and supervised by the *nomenklatura* and its middle-level Party layer, the real vitality and stability of the system depends substantially on this foundation. The influence of this huge group upon Soviet society should not be under-estimated, but in the same basic layer of Party members, we can find at least two other subgroups. The first subgroup, which is not very numerous but in general rather vocal, is the group of critical idealists, about whom we shall talk later when we will try to outline the image of these groups and subgroups. The second subgroup exists in a

relatively safe position at the level of Party members' foundation and may be called a Party ballast, the lumber or the dead wood of this otherwise unprecedentedly gigantic, militant, and dynamic institution.

For many Party members, to climb up to the top of the Party hierarchy is the ultimate dream, one beyond any realization. Even to join their family by having a kin marry a daughter of one of the leaders is imagined as an indescribable delight and boundless honor. To work in the team of such a big leader, as his secretary, aide, or ghost-author would be of enormous prestige. Khrushchev's aide was Lebedev, about whom Solzhenitsyn wrote at some length.[1] My close friend's friend worked on Kosygin's team. This is of course a second-rate position, but while their boss is alive, such people live in a real palace and do not have any worries about their livelihood. But as for their Party bosses, the hundreds who have been elected to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, these people live as if under Communism. The best Moscow apartments, luxurious and practically free restaurants, special foodshops and department stores, tailorshops and wealthy residences in Moscow suburbs, on the Black Sea and in the Crimea, the best opera, ballet and theatre performance at any time and any day, meetings with celebrities during banquets in the Kremlin, the best imaginable life for their wives, children and all their relatives. A single telephone call or a note to their secretaries is sufficient to provide a long-awaited apartment or job for any applicant who was lucky to reach the imposing boss; any plane, train, or ship at their disposal at any time; a highly sophisticated brothel with charming ladies, Western music, liquors and delicacies with Russian-made caviar and salmon in any quantity - this is their life-style. They are served by dozens of lackeys, aides, maids, secretaries and assistants. These persons are supposed to have only one goal, to serve their own nation and their own people. But they are separated from the people by such a gap that it is difficult for them even to imagine the conditions under which these ordinary Russians and other Soviets live.

Ironically, these people know very little about the nature of Marxist-Leninist theory and practice, in whose name they have been brought to the top of social responsibility and success. When they make their statements public, they just repeat what has been provided by special research institutes and verified for them by Party centers. Their life seems like a fairy-tale, but it has its own shadowy aspects. They no longer belong to themselves, and every step and word they take is under surveillance. They know this perfectly well and are fully aware that their houses are bugged and that their maids, chauffers, and bodyguards belong to the KGB.[2] They may read a book printed in any corner of our globe, and at the same time they are so involved in the responsibilities of their job, intra-Party feuds and highly refined

intrigues, in which they play king of the mountain, striving to maintain their own survival at the top and seeking to defeat the schemes of their rivals, that in fact they have no time for learning anything that is beyond their agenda, their routine obligations and their maximal efforts to perpetuate the society which has honored them with such power and trust.

In their everyday business they are highly pragmatically minded. If there are any limitations to their vision, these are connected with their own background and ascent to the top. Undoubtedly, during their climb, they have developed features which are often incompatible with meditative and reflective life. What the people on the top need is the energy and the ability to select friends and allies and the flexibility to deal with their rivals or enemies in the Party. They must also feel pride in their own success and keenly discern what takes place in and outside the country. Besides that, they must thoroughly understand how to be ruthless and merciless with their enemies, that is, the art of walking over their corpses which in Russia is termed as knowing how "to play chess". When their intra-Party enemies are overthrown, they should not glance back. Whether such a one was their own benefactor like Nikita Khrushchev or those, whom they served while they were young, like Molotov or Malenkov, it is dangerous for their inner health to make an about-face and look back. Somewhere they have heard that those who turn back may turn into a pillar of salt.

Those who become Party members may make their great careers on the road of economics, sciences or arts. After a while, they will become ministers, or academicians who will head huge research centers and institutes or reach top positions in the Academy of Sciences. They will become leaders in their own field and become the country's and the world's celebrities as authors, composers, painters, sculptors, actors. In the world of the sciences, these will be people like M. Keldyš, the late President of the Soviet Academy of Science, I.V. Kurčatov, the organizer of nuclear research, S.P. Korolev, who headed the research in missile and spaceship technology, and I.P. Bardin, who was responsible for heavy industry, and some others. In the world of arts, we can mention T. Chrennikov, D. Shostakovich, M. Šolokhov, K. Simonov, A. Tvardovskij, and some others. All of these people have or have had a bright personality in various degrees and quite often a clear gift or even genius in their own field, and the Communist Party, which they were urged or decided to join, was able to channel their zeal for invention, discovery and creation to strengthen the industrial, scientific and specifically cultural potential of the Soviet world.

But almost all of these individuals have a tragic aspect in their life. Mstislav Keldyš was unable to defend some scientists, like Andrei Sakharov or Valentin Turchin who found themselves in serious trouble

in the 1960's and 1970's. Korolev, the student of Ciolkovskij, who often spoke with angels[3], was imprisoned for a number of years under Stalin. Those who worked for Bardin, who had been among the first Soviet-made academicians, recounted strange, if not horrifying, stories which reflected his character and methods of work. T. Chrennikov ruined in himself almost everything he had in his youth.[4] Tomskij, Vučetič and Johanson, who were responsible for the world of Soviet sculpture and painting, are reported in the testimony of their more or less independent colleagues to have been engaged in something more than could be demanded from their creative gifts. After the death of Dmitry Shostakovich, his own memoirs[5], edited by S. Volkov, and the testimony of his son, Maxim, tell us in great detail about the tragic existence and world-vision of this man who was potentially the greatest musical genius of our century. Mikhail Sholokhov, the much-disputed author of the immortal epic *And Quiet Flows the Don*, with his drunken habits and fits of anger does not belong to the happy part of humanity, where he might have been numbered because of his enormous wealth and fame. K. Simonov, who died in his mid-sixties, was an embodiment of double-mindedness. In public, he acted as a mouthpiece of Party attitudes and destructive nihilism towards the real authors and poets, while in his private life he never ceased to be a very kind and generous person, who was able to help many of those whom the same Party had denounced as outcasts and scum of their own society. With his tremendous personal contribution to the world of Russian poetry and his never to be forgotten editorship of *Novyj mir*, the leading literary journal of the Soviet intelligentsia in the 1960's, A. Tvardovskij was an incredibly unhappy and frustrated person and had incredible bouts of suicidal alcoholism. When one hears the stories about the personal life of Dmitry Shostakovich, Mikhail Sholokhov and Aleksandr Tvardovskij, one cannot get rid of the feeling of being present at the scene of the highest human tragedy in which enormous creative talent has been harnessed or tamed by an outside force which has nothing to do with the world of art.

The psychology of these people is not very easy to describe. However, there are already several such attempts in noteworthy literature. Aleksandr Bek has described one of these big officials in his novel *Special Assignment*, which has finally been published in Russia itself during the current *glasnost'*.[6] The portrait of Nikita Khrushchev himself, of his turmoil, disappointments and limitations, vividly shows up in his own memoirs that have been smuggled out of Russia. Roy Medvedev tries to reproduce the character of Khrushchev in his book about him.[7] Solzhenitsyn and V. Lakšin describe Aleksandr Tvardovskij from several angles although the real portrait of this man is still to be given.[8] To a great extent, the image of Dmitry Shostakovich

may be reproduced from his dictation, as was noted by S. Volkov. *The Children of Arbat*, by A. Rybakov, published in the Spring of 1987, has become a great event in the recent cultural history of Russia. There are other numerous approaches and attempts, including my own in the book *The Russian Mind Since Stalin's Death*, but this subject is so interesting, overwhelming and intriguing that, of course, we must wait a while to see serious books and writings in this field.

Of course, each of these men is unique. Those who are engaged in a Party job or in the arts, sciences and economics are not alike, although relationships between these two groups of people are close and their representatives are often friendly. Joseph Stalin had a kind of liking towards Ilya Ehrenburg and Konstantin Simonov. He also forbad the arrest of Boris Pasternak, "the cloud-dweller" although he tortured him for years.[9] He supported Alexei Tolstoy and liked Gorky, although he had him killed. Khrushchev sustained his friendly relationships with Tvardovskij and spared Evtušenko. Brezhnev stayed friendly with Sergej Michalkov and, of course, with those authors, who wrote his "memoirs". Mikhail Suslov was friendly with Jurij Žukov, a leading editor of *Pravda*. Yuri Andropov had his own cronies, like Evgenij Evtušenko and Georgy Arbatov, who was promoted from the position of a social science expert to that of a politician.

But it seems possible to identify some common charactersitics of these people, tossed up by their fate to the top of Soviet public life. By their own positions in the country and in the world, they are quite uncommon and prominent personalities. As far as the politicians are concerned, there is a good percentage of luck which predetermined their ascent and success, at least until the moment they died or were dismissed from their positions. None of them, of course, was able to resist the temptation to climb up. Their own work, its responsibility and importance for the country, their power over a great number of people, their feeling of their own grandeur and indispensability - all of these characteristics belong to them to a great extent. Their luxurious, almost fairy-tale life accompanies their activities, but it is not necessarily something that they had been previously lacking. Nor is their behavior necessarily determined by the fear of losing their highest positions in which they feel themselves like unrestricted Chinese emperors, although this factor cannot be overlooked during the evaluation of these personalities' public behavior. On this level, the feeling that they belong to the Communist Party does not play too high a role for the simple reason that the Party is the Alpha and Omega of their existence. Their Party membership is something self-evident and obvious, but besides that, it does not play too big a role in their existence. For them it is almost the same as their own mother, who produced them, shaped them and with whom they live in the same

house. Likewise, people exist for them only in one function: as pawns, except for those who exist on a higher level than them.

Their work and their power create their entire world. Seeing their own portraits in newspapers, books and movies, they are unable to suppress their feelings of pride. But even this is something not very essential. The most pertinent element in them is the awareness of their own importance for the country and its people. Each of them is the center of the world, and without them, the world would collapse. They understand people very well, otherwise they would not have been able to achieve their power. There is some charisma surrounding each of them, although it has a very specific nature. These people do not have any special hobbies or inclinations. In his seventies, after he was removed from his office, Khrushchev had to acquire some skills in planting tomatoes.[10] Irregardless of the much advertised hobbies of Yuri Andropov in tennis, gypsy songs and Western music, his only passion was power and how to handle it. Kosygin was fond of theater. Shelepin told his friends about his interest for existentialist philosophy. Brezhnev was fond of hunting boar. Voroshilov liked to spend his time outdoors, in Serebryanyi Bor, Moscow, and in his residence near Sukhumi. Kaganovich was keen on soccer. Anastas Mikoyan liked horseback riding. Podgorny was said to be interested in movies and kept friendly ties with film-producers. Romanov inclined towards the entourage and the China of Russian emperors.

But all of these details describe their means of finding recreation and leisure in the hours between their severe fights for power and survival. They have everything they and their families desire, except for one tiny thing, the stability of their superficially quiet life and their own freedom. They cannot be quiet for a single day, for in the external world they not only see their own mortal foes, but are also permanently surrounded with their own rivals, who are unceasingly digging a deep pit for them. The sophistication of these intrigues and schemes cannot be compared with anything known in the courts of Nero, among the Venetian doges, in Elizabethan London or even during Stalin's reign. The fears which they try to conquer pursue them day and night. They know that they are safe in the country, guarded by millions of soldiers and KGB agents, by the mighty ideological apparatus and the serfdom of their own nation. But they do not understand why their own people, deprived of all imaginable comfort and means of livelihood, do not foment an uprising, which, of course, will be immediately stifled, like in Novočerkassk or Kemerovo[11], East Germany in 1953, or Hungary in 1956.

However, it seems increasingly onerous to deal with the indignation and disappointment of common people. The image of Hitler's regime, which finally fell under the crushing blows of the allied forces,

does not leave them, for the fascist regime is absolutely identical to their own. And in their subconscious and often conscious life, they do not see any light down the tunnel. Common people, until recently, drank without any self-control. Peasants do not want to produce any grain or vegetables. Workers are unable to handle modern equipment. Soviet industry finds itself far behind Western science and technology. The Soviet military machine is horrifyingly expensive. The KGB apparatus grows enormously and, with Yuri Andropov's ascent, it consolidated its power in the country. To fund the Marxist regimes in Vietnam and Angola, Nicaragua and Cuba becomes more and more expensive. Financially, Poland is broke. Afghanistan will continue to be a repudiation of all Marxist-Leninist principles for another decade. To subsidize the nuclear freeze movement in the world, the KGB-supported intelligence network in various countries all over the globe leads the financial situation of the Kremlin to the brink of disaster. And initially it was much more difficult to cope with Reagan, than with Nixon, Ford or Carter. The Russian intelligentsia is stifled. House searches are organized in central cities by the hundreds. About three hundred thousand Russians, under the camouflage of Jewish, German, and Armenian stock, have been allowed to leave the country since the early 1970's, but the internal situation relaxed only temporarily. The emigration should be terminated not only because it is an actual brain-drain, but because these people, while abroad, strike a blow against the disinformation machinery supported from inside Russia. Several hundred Russian intellectuals live throughout the whole world and continue to write and speak. Their friends, who remained in Russia, are mainly in prisons and prison camps. The brilliant Russian academician Andrei Sakharov was isolated in Gorky under the permanent watch of the KGB, and created a constant pain in the neck for them. There is no time to relent in the future, and it is increasingly impossible to feed the people with stories about the yawning heights of Communism.

One can seriously assume that spiritually, these people remain almost children all the days of their life. Under Stalin it was easier: they continued to be his appointed executioneers or they were kicked out and automatically killed. The country was not allowed to know the secrets of the Madrid Court, nor those of the Central Asian Emirate. Now many of them receive reasonable pensions when they are overthrown or ejected from their jobs. When Khrushchev retired, he used to sob like a child. Marshal Voroshilov was playing on the floor with toy soldiers and horsemen. Georgi Zhukov was drinking beyond any limits. In the last months of his rule, when he was helpless and virtually out of power, Leonid Brezhnev entertained himself in the world of letters and was quite often seen in public with tears in his eyes. Marshal Semen Mikhailovich Budenny, a hero of the Civil War and the founder of the

Red Army Cavalry, was a mere child in his eighties and in his irreversible senility: he could sign any inflammatory petition against his own government. In his last years, it was strictly prohibited to address Marshal Budenny with a request to sign any petition. In Moscow, after the attempt to assassinate Brezhnev in 1969, a joke became widespread:

> "Semyon Mikhailovich, have you heard that there has been an attempt to shoot Brezhnev?" "What, what?" (He was quite deaf.) "There has been a recent attempt to shoot Brezhnev!" "Ah, so! Have they hit him?" "No, they missed." "That's a pity. But have they tried to hit him with a sabre, with a sabre, ah?"

Among some prominent Party members whom I observed more or less directly, was the late director of the Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences, academician Babajan Gafuravič Gafurov, the former first secretary of the Tadzhikistan Communist Party in 1946-1956. Born in Tadzhikistan, which borders Iran and Afghanistan, he was in his early teens when the Revolution took place in Petrograd and Moscow. In the 1920's he became a Young Communist League activist in Tadzhikistan and in the early 1930's he enlisted in the Communist Party. He also worked as a journalist, served in the Soviet judiciary and also in the propaganda system of the Tadzhikistan Party during World War Two. From 1946 until 1956, he was the main boss of the Tadzhik Republic and as of 1956 he headed the Oriental Institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, in which position he remained more than twenty years until his death. In 1968, Babajan Gafurov was elected a member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences.[12]

Babajan Gafurov was among those Communist Party members who should not be forgotten by posterity. He had a bright personality and obviously grotesque features, looking almost like a monster. A close friend of mine, the Czechoslovakian orientalist Kamil Zvelebil, after having been received by Babajan Gafurov in 1959 in his spacious and magnificent study, could not afterward regain his composure for a long time and on his way from the Oriental Institute back to the hotel, repeated time and again: "My goodness, such a monstrous creature!" Kamil Zvelebil compared Babajan Gafurov to his own director of the "Ustav Orientalni", Dr. Prušek, and was obliged to say that next to Dr. Gafurov Dr. Prušek looked like an angel.

I saw Dr. Gafurov regularly for more than ten years until the day he chaired the meeting of the Enlarged Scholarly Council, by which I was expelled from the Oriental Institute for signing a petition concerning the persecutions against intellectuals and national minoritites, specifically including the Crimean Tartars. There was something quite frightening in his appearance. He had a gloomy face and an almost stone-like ex-

pression as if, like Gogol's Sabakevich, he was built with the help of an axe. While passing through the long corridor of his own Institute, he greeted with a barely identifiable smile those who bowed before him. Many of his subordinates, the members of the same Communist Party to which he belonged, were almost ready to prostrate themselves in front of Gafurov. He looked like a Chinese emperor, forced to walk on his own feet instead of being carried by numerous servants and yes-men in a magnificent ivory-incrusted palanquin. Independently of our concluding and necessarily unfortunate face-to-face rendezvous, I was invariably shocked by the appearance of this great man, and my impression did not deviate from the feelings of my numerous colleagues. A short, black-haired, and dark-skinned sexagenarian, he looked, of course, very uncomfortable amidst Muscovites and their European-style houses. It seemed to me that he missed his Tadzhikistan with its vine-growing valleys, its cool, sharp-peaked tents, the steaming bish-barmak, whose hot, fat meat made his mouth water and the aromatic tea spread on the thick carpets under his feet. When he forced himself to smile, the expression on his face became even more frightening and he looked like a rattlesnake prepared to spring upon its prey. He was a descendant of high-mountain, nomadic tribes, which for centuries had very little to do with the civilized European culture. Each time I met him at the Institute, whether in its long corridors or during a meeting, I wondered what this person had to do with Oriental Studies, which have traditionally attracted the most refined and noble-minded Russians. At those moments, looking at his iron face and lame gait, I thought how precise was his nickname among the Orientalists: Tamerlane, which means "an iron lame (man)". The greatest conqueror of the East after Genghiz Khan, Tamerlane became famous for his fanatical cruelty. Because of a miracle attributed to a Russian icon of the Holy Mother, he was unable to reach Moscow and turned back. But what could stop this modern Tamerlane from invading Russia?

While in Tadzhikistan, step after step, he climbed up to the last staircase of power. One can imagine the heroic deeds this person had to perform prior to his becoming the Party *Führer* of Tadzhikistan under Stalin's blessing: the struggle with the Basmachi who preferred death to the domination of the godless Soviet Kafirs, the ruthless collectivization which deprived the cattle-feeders of their property and sustenance on the mountain slopes of Pamir, the imprisonment and execution of numerous educated and Marxism-inspired Party cadets, and the recruitment into the Red Army of those mountaineers who did not want to sacrifice their lives for Stalin and Communism. In these causes, Babajan Gafurov had made his magnificent contribution in order to be noticed by Stalin and his comrades-in-arms.

Gafurov was the Party boss of Tadzhikistan in the last seven years

of Stalin's life, when one could not breathe comfortably. The waves of repression followed one after another. It is true that a good number of Jews, including my close friend, who had no chance to find any job in Moscow or other central cities, were accepted in Tadzhikistan and other Central Asian republics. However, the republic was a part of the Union. Gafurov was responsible for what occurred in his republic and he could not have survived if he had not followed the line prescribed by Stalin and implemented by persons like Ždanov and Berija. Gafurov was personally responsible for the crime against the mountain tribes, who were forced to leave their cloud-dwelling Kishlacks and descend into valleys in order to help increase the production of cotton, so much demanded by the center. Gafurov and his assistants were repeatedly warned that these mountain people would die from suffocation in the valleys, for their lungs were accustomed to an absolutely different atmosphere. These warnings fell on Gafurov's deaf ears and thousands of poorlings were deported from their villages and in the months to come they died in pain, with everyone around them unable to lessen their sufferings. They felt like fish thrown out upon the sand.

Soon after Stalin's death, Gafurov found himself in trouble. His rivals took the upper hand and he had to look for another job. He miscalculated his steps and spoiled his relationships with Khrushchev, who was soon to become the leader of Russia. Naturally, Gafurov, whose ambition was prompting him to join the Moscow choir of ideological denunciations, was in close touch with those who had been arrested, executed or dismissed from their top positions by the mid-1950's. In June 1957, Khrushchev found himself in serious trouble on account of those whom he and Soviet propaganda castigated as an "anti-Party group". These were headed by Georgy Malenkov, Vjačeslav Molotov, and others. Gafurov received a message from Khrushchev asking him for help in a critical moment. Gafurov did not answer and no longer enjoyed great support from Khrushchev.

However, this happened when Gafurov was removed from a highly responsible job in Tadzhikistan to a relatively third-rate position as head of the Oriental Institute in the Soviet Academy of Sciences. His downfall from the position of the leader of the Tadzhikistan Communist Party could have been even more disastrous, had he not developed an activity, parallel to his main Party job. In the atmosphere of incredible corruption characteristic for Transcaucasia and Central Asia in the time of his being engaged in Party propaganda in Tadzhikistan, Gafurov published many articles under his name, including the "ground-breaking" monograph *The History of the Tadzhik People*. Various sources and facts show that Babajan Gafurov did not exert too great of an effort in writing this book, which was printed repeatedly under his name in the republic, and that the work was done by persons working

under his umbrella. This "monograph" and other works, which were being published with terrifying speed and volume, entitled him to promote himself to the Tadzhik Academy of Sciences and to become an associate member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. The national policy of the Communist Party encouraged the flourishing of national cultures in the multinational Soviet Union, and Babajan Gafurov succeeded in building for himself a comfortable and promising niche. Naturally, a great deal of research was needed to show that the greatest poets of medieval Iran, like the author of *Shah-name*, Omar Hayam, and many others, had enriched world culture in the womb of the Tadzhik people, whose language at some stage was a dialect of the Iranian language. Like all other monographs, Gafurov's masterpiece proved that the Tadzhik people throughout their centuries-long history had no other wish but to reunite their destiny and future with the fraternal Russian people and especially their heroic working class. Poverty-stricken *dekkhans* - peasants and nomadic cattle-feeders of the Tadzhik nation - were said to suffer intolerably under the yoke of their wealthy landlords and fanatic Mollahs. The only salvation they could see for themselves was the bright sun and the healing rays of Lenin's Party and its life-transforming ideas.

Having come to the Oriental Institute where his predecessor had close and friendly ties with Stalin's hangman Lavrentij Berija, who had by that time been effectively shot in the KGB headquarters, Babajan Gafurov quickly made the world of Oriental studies unrecognizable. The tiny academic institution, whose scholars were mainly engaged with dust-covered manuscripts written on ancient Egyptian papyri, Indian palm leaves or in splendid Arabic and Persian calligraphy, in less than ten years was transformed, due to the giant efforts of Babajan Gafurov, into a gigantic political institution with almost one thousand persons, representing all kinds of ethnic cultures and levels of education.

In a short time, Gafurov turned his institute into a kind of Central Asian Emirate. A good part of the institute's personnel was recruited from the relatives of Gafurov's influential friends who worked in the Party's Central Committee or in other important places. The Institute was swarming with professional criminals who ought to have been locked up for killing pedestrians with cars, smuggling golden coins from Iran and having been arrested by the customs. They included those responsible Party leaders who had raped their secretaries or regularly locked their doors in order to perform sexual acts in their study on the much-rumored sofa with some pretty doctoral candidates, as well as some lucky Crimean Tartars, close friends of Babajan himself, who were accepted to the Institute by entire families despite the obvious fact that they had almost nothing to do with Oriental Studies.

There were also daughters of prominent Soviet military generals, sons of famous Civil War heroes who happened to be relatives of Andrei Gromyko or other Soviet leaders, former Soviet spies who had been ejected from various Eastern countries, members of foreign Communist countries, for whom the work in the Institute was a mere sinecure, former correspondents of leading Soviet newspapers abroad, those KGB officials who had been fired from their capital job after Stalin's death, and those so-called linguists, who had been harassing scholars for years under Stalin's rule but ultimately fell out of his favor.

Each of these 'scholars' had a Party card which served as his or her pass to the Institute and also guaranteed the personal blessing of Gafurov. As a rule, those who were Party members considered that they were released from the obligation to be engaged in scholarly work. And what scholarly work could they do if they knew that their top boss was only signing his name on manuscripts which were compiled for him by his ghost-writers? But there were also many constellations of those who specialized in the national-liberation movements of Iraq or Algeria, Japan or Korea, who knew about the real or faked developments in the working classes and peasantries of various countries. There were scores of those who were looking into the centuries-old literature in order to show how they reflected the pangs of the toiling masses, to repudiate their faith and religious views, and to reveal their readiness to fight against their landlords, Khans and emperors.

For Gafurov, it was very important to throw dust into the eyes of highly placed individuals who could halt the further widening of his Empire. Professional scholars were gradually turned into research assistants and interpreters for the Party, government, and state security institutions. They wrote speeches and articles for the Kremlin leaders, and worked as agents and informers for the KGB, which regularly sent them abroad. They organized widely publicized conferences and international congresses, which tried to place the Oriental Institute on the map, disseminated the Communist ideology, and increased the state security's methods of infiltration. But all this had less than little to do with any scholarly activities. Of course, they published dozens of books and monographs on subjects related to the development of the Communist Parties in various countries of Africa and Asia, the national-liberation movements, the stages in the development of non-existing working classes, *etc.* There were also published thick volumes of grammars or histories of literature in various languages and in different Oriental countries, which had, as a rule, dubious scholarly merits.

But Gafurov seemed to know what he was doing quite well. The Potemkin village built by him grew enormously large. Soviet orientalists represented the advanced and ideologically pure methodology all over the world and some leading world experts were

tempted to interrupt their peaceful scholarly research in order to travel to the Soviet Union at the expense of their hosts. They were, of course, treated as highly honored guests and used to say nice and flattering words to their hosts, praising their scholarly achievements and inviting them to pay a similar visit to their own country and their own university. Rare people would read those thin booklets or thick volumes published by the Oriental Institute, but this abundant production of books created a favorable impression on those who saw their quantity.

Gafurov worked with an enviable enthusiasm. He pressured his chiefs in various departments and made extremely long speeches, in which he lauded Nikita Khrushchev for being a devoted Leninist and, when the latter was ousted, he did the same for Leonid Brezhnev who was his old-time friend in Central Asia. He knew how to behave at Communist Party meetings which were regularly convened by his organization and which embraced several hundred Party members. On those days, this descendant of Genghiz Khan and Tamerlane behaved like a "democrat", as some sharp-tongued wits from the Party ranks called him behind his back. When going through the long corridor to the large, antique-columned hall, where his Party colleagues were waiting for another one of his historical appearances, he looked radiant and, contrary to his everyday manners, greeted everyone he met, cordially shaking their hands. A couple of times he shook hands even with me when I happened to be near the hall. Obviously he did not know and could not care less who the majority of his Institute's scholars were and whether they were Party members or not. He wanted to please his subordinates and pacify any possible grudges or indignation against his personality or his policy. What he wanted in his Institute was peace as well as the desire on the part of its members to improve the prestige and reputation of his Empire. Trouble-makers were expelled from the Party and chased from the Institute.

Under his name, Gafurov published so many monographs, books and articles that no super-intelligent person, even if he dedicated all his time to writing and had seven heads and eight hands, could write them alone. But Gafurov had a huge bunch of subordinates who were working on behalf of his fame and scholarly reputation, whether for its final glory or ruin.This profuse scholarly and propagandistic literature, embracing the intricate structure of the ancient Kushan civilization up to the time of the national-liberation movements in various countries of Asia and Africa as well as in our world in general, was published in many thousands of copies. Babajan Gafurov was also cherishing the idea of becoming an actual member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and after that, most probably, to replace Mstislav Keldyš in his high position as the President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. But his political career was ruined irreversibly. Even under Brezhnev, he could

never be elected as a deputy of the Supreme Soviet and his dream to resume his membership in the Central Committee of the Communist Party could never be realized. He would never become the President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences or even one of the Vice-Presidents. But he was not frustrated in his efforts to become an actual member, an Academician of the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

In 1968, the year of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, of large-scale administrative repressions and the year of the greatest turmoil for the Soviet intelligentsia, this essentially illiterate Party boss from Central Asia, who would undoubtedly fail his exam in Russian language, world history or literary studies even on the undergraduate level in a second-rate college, was elected an actual member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences to the dismay of the few remaining scholars and scientists and to the unconcealed gloating of those who had for a long time given up any hope in connection with this most prestigious academic institution of the world.

While he was on his way to becoming an Academician, the crucial events in the Soviet scholarly and scientific world took place along with the turmoil and indignation amidst the creative and thoughtful intelligentsia in general. Babajan Gafurov personally presided over the Enlarged Scholarly Council, which excluded myself from the Institute in April, 1968. This happened to be only an initial point in the expulsion of a number of distinguished scholars, of whom any country could have reasons to be proud. Within several years the following scholars were expelled or left the Oriental Institute of the Academy of Scinces for political reasons, including the hard decision to emigrate abroad: A. Pjatigorskij, M. Zand, E. Semeka, B. Ogibenin, Y. Bregel, I. Rabinovič, A. Syrkin, Vitalij and Ina Rubin, N. Lubotskaja, A. Gerasimov.[13] Many other persons left the Oriental Institute for other institutes or were forced to retire: A. Barchudarov, Y. Roždestvenskij, O. Volkova, I. Filštinskij.

Perhaps, Gafurov was not very happy about this development in his Institute, for it was perfectly clear to him that as the best scholars were leaving, difficulties would arise for him in continuing his cordial relationships with prominent orientalists throughout the world. But his worst expectations were not well-founded. Except for some prominent scholars, like Dr. Kamil Zvelebol from Prague, eminent orientalists of the world overlooked once more the ordeal of their colleagues in the Soviet Union. Nevertheless in 1974, in Paris, the world's orientalists supported Vitaly Rubin's right to emigrate to Israel and their resolution to organize the next Congress in Mexico instead of in Eastern Europe, poisoned Gafurov's blood. When in the Fall of 1976, he arrived in Mexico City with the team of Soviet scholars, his mood was spoiled by the presence of some former Soviet scholars who spoke with him in a

very harsh manner; and I happened to be present at the Congress as well. Frankly speaking, I wanted to place a telephone call to his room and invite him for lunch. After all, I was grateful to him for everything he had done for me, including my expulsion from Institute. But I did not dare to call him. I thought that his reaction to my call would be identical to the one that met the post-card which I mailed to him when I was leaving Moscow for Rome, in which, along with my farewell, I thanked him for his good deeds to me.

This post-card, mailed to him by me, was delivered to the KGB as evidence of "political hooliganism". I regret to this day that I did not call him while we were in the same city and perhaps in the same hotel. At that time I did not know that he was already fatally ill with a kidney disease and, two years later, I read that Babajan Gafurov had died. In its obituary, the *Slavic Review*, published in the U.S., praised the achievements of this prominent scholar.[14] On his deathbed, Academician Gafurov asked to be buried in his native Tadzhikistan. From my close friend I know that he had been favorably mentioning those whom he was forced to expel from the Institute, especially those demanding that the Crimean Tartars, who shared the same religious ideas as his forefathers and he himself in his youth or in his private life, be allowed to return to their native land, the magically beautiful Crimea. From what I know, Communist ideas did not fully permeate his blood, and to a great extent, he remained a Moslem and retained the personality with which he was born. Perhaps, without the Party membership, he would have led a happier life than the one he left behind him.

CHAPTER THREE

The Middle-Level Party Layer

Proceeding from the *nomenklatura*, we find the next large and exceedingly important group of Party members who have almost placed one foot into the ruling elite. These persons are elected as party secretaries or as leading members of the party committees in large plants, factories, universities, research institutes, huge and advanced collective farms. They are the leading political commissars in the Soviet army, navy and state security detachments. Tomorrow these men and women will be famous all over the country and the whole world for being advanced workers of production, Stakhanovite miners, milk- maids, famous breeders and agrarians. But much more often, these are not very well-known ordinary workers and Party functionaries. They are the real organizers of Party life in the Soviet Union, and are ringleaders in the so-called Party active groups, which exist everywhere.

These are people who have rejected personal freedom and merged themselves with the Party. This does not necessarily mean that they consider the Party to be the body of the wise. These people are not fools. They are not necessarily endowed with a mediocre intelligence, and had they been provided with normal opportunities for their intellectual and moral development, they could have become interesting personalities. These people have been discouraged by the role which an independent and intelligent person may play in Soviet society. They were cynical about the fruits these independent persons could bring forth by their independent efforts and in general have a rather low opinion concerning the individual aspirations and endeavors of various personalities in Russia. They are aware of the chaos of anarchy and destruction, which is concealed in the mob in general and in the Russian crowd in particular. They themselves enlisted in the Communist Party for various reasons, including those connected with their financial welfare and the sense of security. But with the increasing number of years spent in the Party, their mentality undergoes gradual and serious shifts. They say that in their life and character, Party membership appeared to be meaningful, challenging and in some respects rewarding. The Soviet ironic folklore has coined a motto: "If you want to live well, pay Party fees."[1] Their main profession is still significant, but their Party membership has added some specific colors to their professional activity. As a rule, Party members do not constitute the most creative segment of professionals because professional efforts are quite often stirred up by the desire to establish a stable and decent position,

which otherwise one cannot achieve. However, with his Party membership, a person can continue his mediocre efforts and take part in the officially prescribed social life, so that he will not be forgotten or ignored.

With time, these people's individuality decreases while their Party sociability increases. The longer they live, the more they are aware that their personality may develop adequately when it is closely interwoven with society and serves it.[2] They see, not without a certain consternation, that several of their former friends, especially non-Party members, try to stay at arm's length from them. But they take this for granted and even with a dose of relief. It would be burdensome to discuss the innumerable questions connected with the injustices of the recent past, the horrors of collectivization, Stalinist massacres and meaningless bloodbaths during the war. There is nothing new in that. They do not deny that many events in Soviet history took place which could not make any society proud. But their knowledge of history, especially of the English Revolution in the 1640's and the French Revolution in 1789, as well as of the dialectical method deduced by Hegel and improved by Marx and Stalin comes as their resort and salvage. What great achievements could take place in human history without blood and sacrifices? And if there are shadowy sides to their own society, it would be prudent to view reality from the positive side. They have heard somewhere that even Christian authors suggest this healing and very salutary positive attitude.

They do not cherish any illusions about Lenin and Stalin. Many Party members know that Lenin was Jewish on his maternal side and that his fatal disease which ended in paralysis was triggered by an unfortunate venereal infection known to the biographers of Friedrich Nietzsche and Klement Gottwald. They know that Stalin was a murderous criminal and a madman worse than Ivan the Terrible and Peter the First. But that does not mean anything. Lenin should be praised for his revolutionary genius and Stalin solidified this state. Without Stalin's hard hand, the country would have been unable to endure so many tragedies and difficulties. You cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs. Solzhenitsyn, whom they had read once upon a time, wrote in his *First Circle* that Stalin responded testingly to Abakumov, when the latter requested the right to execute people: "And you - are you not afraid that we might shoot you among the first?"[3] These Party members become almost mystical. If their destiny was to be executed like Bukharin or Kamenev, then what could one say? But those people committed serious errors. Only at their trial and before their execution did they understand what it meant to dissolve in the Party like salt in water. As Jurij Pjatakov said to N.V. Volskij, prior to his execution under Stalin: "The essential characteristic of this Party is that it is

bound by no laws, it is always extending the realm of the possible until nothing becomes impossible. Nothing is inadmissible for it, nothing unrealizable. For such a Party, a true Bolshevik will readily cast from his mind ideas in which he believed for years. A true Bolshevik has submerged his personality in the collectivity, "the Party", to such an extent that he can make the necessary effort to break away from his own opinions and convictions, and can honestly agree with the Party that this is the test of a true Bolshevik. There can be no life for him outside the ranks of the Party, and he would be ready to believe that black was white, and white was black if the Party required it. In order to become one with this great Party, he would fuse himself to it, abandon his own personality, so that there was no particle left inside him which was not one with the Party, did not belong to it.[4] Pjatakov's predecessor in this vision was Trotsky himself, who had made his famous statement at the Thirteenth Party Congress in 1924: "My Party, right or wrong ... I know one cannot be right against the Party ... for history has not created other ways for the realization of what is right."[5]

One perceives something more than mere drama in these lines. These words were a rehearsal for the infamous Stalinist trials in which the defendants went to the scaffold while praising the Party. Perhaps the peak of this self-rejection and self-delusion was the exclamation of Commander Iona Jakir in front of his firing squad. He could not help knowing that his real executioneer was Stalin and nonetheless his last words sounded: "Long live the Party! Long live Stalin!"[6] In the 1930's and even in the 1940's a Party member could have still believed that the Party was unable to commit mistakes; but after the death of Stalin and the series of the Party's suicidal revelations, who wanted to believe in its infallibility? Is it not a striking paradox that the millions of people who would deny the divine origin of the Church and grin at a remark about Papal infallibility, are dead serious about the inability of their own Party to plunge into errors. But now, those who dedicate their energy and activity to the Party no longer have to convince themselves to believe in its ideology. The man who had made the revolution and had been killed by the Party said: "My Party, right or wrong!" These people still believe that the infernal machinery of self-immolation and suicide will not recommence its action nowadays; but how can they be sure? The expectation of the worst lies concealed in the very heart of the Party structure and therefore one can read on their faces not only the expression of fear, but feelings of doom as well. What then? Their subconscious helps them intensify their energy in order to strengthen the giant mechanism inside and outside of the country. Whatever their future is, and they are pretty sure that the stability of life will continue for decades to come, they will not repeat the mistakes of their great predecessors, Stepan Razin and Emelyan Pugachev, who did not strug-

gle properly to remove the danger of their mercilessly approaching end.

In general, these people understand many things. They would laugh while listening to an anti-Soviet joke in their tiny circle. They had no illusions about Brezhnev and they know only too well the part of the Soviet apparatus which had pushed up the leaders of Russia like Yuri Andropov and Mikhail Gorbachev. These people are extremely subtle in their actions and intrigues. They know how to speak in public and most of all they are experts in the science of silence and double-dealing. They have to deal with people at least until they climb up higher to the level where they hope they will become invulnerable.[7] More often than not, anti-state actions are performed by these responsible people in order to establish their praiseworthy reputation in the eyes of their superiors. An illustrious example of this was given in 1959-1960 by a Ryazan Party secretary Aleksej Larionov who had ordered the slaughter of a great majority of cattle in his own as well as neighboring areas in order to fulfill and over-fulfill his committments as a meat supplier. The disastrous slaughter of cattle went on along with the praise of his name in the central media while he expected to receive a top position in the Party. But he failed to foresee some difficulties and denunciations and committed suicide.[8] This was an extreme case, but everybody in Russia knows what is going on in plants and factories, shopping centers and truck companies, in fishing industries and the world of entertainment. Embezzlement and corruption thrive and the middle-level Party members are deeply involved in that business. The recent scandals in the Ministry of Fisheries and the big Party groups in Krasnodor and Sochi are just the tip of the iceberg. Of course, not all of them are crooks, but the more honest a person is, the more difficult it is for him to climb up.

These people are not necessarily drunks, but they do not belong to any club of teetotalers. They are not idealists, but they are full of energy and virility. They do not need any great faith in the future of their country. Their philosophy might be described as Party existentialism. They have enormous patience and can wait for years in order to realize their intentions to be promoted higher and to become a part of the ruling elite. Of course, they form their own groups of mafias, as they are nicknamed in Russia. From time to time, a situation they must face or an opportunity which shows up demands quick and risky actions on their part. In this case, they have to calculate their chances and resources and properly weigh the chances of failure which would throw them downhill. As a rule, they try to acquire appropriate scholarly degrees and titles in order to secure a safe harbor for themselves in case of a fiasco or failure to climb up. Many of them are gamblers and life provides them with enormous opportunities to apply their skills. They gamble with the Party, with their own colleagues and

with their own life. There are so many pleasures and comforts in life and these people can appreciate them. They do not want to think much about those who have failed and took their own lives after being removed from their top positions, like Aleksandr Fadeev and Semen Cvigun or threatened to do so, like Ekaterina Furtseva. But they keep this exit in mind as well. Some of them may even go further and defect, like Arkadij Ševčenko, or allow themselves to be recruited by Western intelligence. They should not be reminded about the punishment the Soviet punitive system keeps in store for this. At some stage of their life they have taken oaths and left appropriate secret signatures.

The longer they remain in the Party and the higher they climb, the better they know that there is no way back down or out. They belong to the Party while they are alive; they belong to the Party on their deathbed; and they belong to the Party afterwards. Alla Tarasova, a famous Soviet actress and a long-time Party member, asked in her will for religious rites over her coffin. It was done and reported in the *New York Times*, but it was not an honest deed for the Party member! An honest Party member could ask for a five-point star, but not a cross on his burial place! Having served their Party throughout their lives, it would be wrong to ask for any mercy from God. In all seriousness, these people have been assigned to lead other people and they are essentially bloodsuckers. They investigate the files of virtuous people; they prevent them from being promoted; they try their best to fire them from a job; and they could not care less if these people land in prison in the long run. They would not hire a good person, if they already have a Party-carded villain. But their conscience does not suffer much. They can organize a meeting, where Solzhenitsyn or many other prominent Soviet authors will be expelled from the Soviet Writers Union. They will authorize the expulsion from the Academy of Sciences of those who may be the pride of the country's scholarly and scientific community. They will not allow Mstislav Rostropovich to perform his cello concert or will not allow Galina Višnevskaja to sing in the Bolshoi theatre. They will ban the exhibition of talented painters and sculptors as well as the publications of real poets. The Party demands it. They are not guilty. In Okudžava's words, "and if anything seems wrong, it's not our business; like they say 'Our Motherland gave orders'. How great to be absolutely blameless, just a simple soldier, a soldier."[9]

Strange as it may seem, even among these people who exist and work in order to enslave others there are subdivisions into relatively better persons and incorrigible thugs. To be a Party member on the middle and higher-middle level presupposes the ability to "play chess" or climb over the corpses of their colleagues and friends, and if not so, then they must at least be able to vote for the expulsion of their colleagues from the Party and from the job. Quite often this means capital

punishment. But it is not the guilty person, as they say, who executes, but the one who is careless enough to speak out or put his head down on the scaffold. As popular wisdom asserts, a respectable person commits villainies without great desire. In other words, those who send their colleagues or subordinates to the scaffold do not take great satisfaction in doing so. When they hire or fire people, they are naturally tightly connected not only with the regional and area Party committees, but with the KGB as well, with whom, no doubt, they have to get along. When necessary, they should behave like "loyal Soviet citizens" and provide the KGB or the appropriate departments of the Central Committee with the information they have obtained while working with their colleagues inside the country or outside, during their trips or sojourns abroad.

Even among them, there are "respectable persons" and "bitches". A respectable man is one who will not necessarily denounce the content of an innocent table conversation to the KGB. These people also need friendly parties at which they feel themselves more or less relaxed. They also wish to exchange a good amount of their unorthodox observations and politically dubious jokes. For the same conversations and political anecdotes that they themselves lead or exchange with each other, the ordinary Soviet citizen could find himself in very serious trouble. These people have various levels of "clearance" (*sekretnost'* and *dopusk*). Any one of them knows a great deal about what it means to read books which are never on the shelves of Soviet public libraries and also about what is qualified as anti-Soviet stuff. These people have to know these secret data and how to respond to difficult questions, if and when they arise. They have to know how to answer the most difficult questions about the millions of people starved to death and about the cases of cannibalism during the collectivization period. They should say that in Stalin's time, there were, alas, numerous and too numerous cases of illegal arrests and executions, but the Communist Party was partially able to cope with that during Stalin's life and, of course, it put an end to the "personality cult" and its excesses after Stalin's death.[10] They should answer properly why the Soviet army was obliged to help the real Communists in Hungary and Czechoslovakia crush the counter-revolution in 1956 and 1968. They might not believe what they themselves say, but they still have answers. And it is amidst all this that the anti-Soviet jokes about Marxism-Leninism, its founders, Marx, Lenin and Stalin, become widespread, as well as those about the heroes of the Civil War, Čapaev and Budenny, about collective-farm teamleaders and milkmaids. There are always some Party members and non-Party members among them who are eager to unload themselves in their presence of these perilous stories. But they should know people quite well and not divulge too much in the

presence of those whom they do not trust.

They should not trust "bitches" (*suki*), who have nothing sacred in their souls and are really ready to sell their father and mother to the KGB. Soviets - Russians and non-Russians are perfect actors - otherwise they would be unable to survive. But there is positively no way to know within weeks or months, whether the person in question has been recruited by the omniscient and omnipotent KGB or not. The late Babajan Gafurov said in his private conversation that his deputy Dr. Achramovič, was a "bitch".[11] This meant that Dr. Achramovič, in his judgement, had ties with the KGB which trespassed the permitted boundaries. But there is nothing extraordinary in this manner of behavior in the history of the Soviet Communist Party. Roman Malinovsky, the head of the Social-Democrat group in the Tsarist Duma, was an agent of the Okhrana. He was executed by the Communists after the Revolution, although he had a good chance to survive in the West and his close friend, Vladimir Lenin, did not want to speak with him despite the repeated requests of Roman Malinovsky.[12] The relationships of the Okhrana with Joseph Stalin were mysterious. Stalin himself had many of his close friends and relatives killed. Zinovyev and Kamenev betrayed Trotsky, and all three of them were killed by Stalin's orders. Molotov signed many death sentences. The state security twice arrested Molotov's wife and sent her into exile, while Molotov himself was within a hair's breadth of being arrested and executed. Malenkov betrayed Berija to Khrushchev and, after a life and death struggle with the latter, was expelled from the Party for his "anti-Party activity" and exiled. Khrushchev himself was ousted by those, including Brezhnev, whom he had hand-picked, promoted and trusted. The seventy-five-year-old Brezhnev had promoted Yuri Andropov to become the head of the KGB and apparently many months before his untimely death he was harassed and hounded by his own protégé.[13]

By no means could Andropov himself be sure that his life would not be abruptly shortened by those whom he promoted and cautiously trusted. In this system, nobody trusts any other entirely and everybody has solid reasons for that. The situation in the country and in the world depends very much upon the extent to which the "Party bitches" will dominate the upper echelons of power and its middle levels. Having unleashed an anti-dissident movement since 1968, the Communist Party leadership has created a favorable environment for bringing forth unprincipled and morally unbridled middle-level leaders. The suppression of Dubček, the subjugation of the Polish Solidarity, and the repressions inside the country against the group of "socialists", the ascent of Andropov and his friends, symbolizing the power of the KGB in the Party - these and many other facts seem to prove that in recent years the "Party bitches" have gained the upper hand. We now have at our

disposal enough books which perpetuate this class of career-making Party members. Here, I am tempted to offer a brief story about one of these persons, whom I have had a pleasure to observe more or less closely since 1947, for almost thirty-six years. Although I have met many persons who want to climb up the social ladder, in my opinion, Dr. Vadim Michailovič Solncev epitomizes those types of people whose ambitions, aspirations and morally dubious actions have not entirely squeezed out some pretensions to appear as a person of intelligence and integrity.

By this time, Vadim Solncev has submitted his thesis for the Soviet Doctorate of philological sciences and now heads the Department of Linguistics at the Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences in Moscow, combining this responsible position with that of being a deputy editor-in-chief of the leading Soviet linguistic magazine *Voprosy Jazykoznanija*. If his health does not deteriorate (in the mid-1960's he had a heart attack which seemed almost fatal), he has a good chance of becoming the director of his own or some other academic institute. He will be elected as a corresponding member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, but I will not be surprised if he makes an even more spectacular ascent in the world of the Soviet hierarchy. Along with scholarly work, Dr. Vadim Solncev, a member of the Communist Party since the early 1950's, dedicates an essential part of his efforts to the administration and the Party job. From time to time, he goes abroad, although, to my information, he was not given a visa by the British Government in 1982. But I will be absolutely amazed if, one day, I read in the news that Vadim Solncev has defected from the Soviet Union and asked for political asylum in the West. Whether he is a devoted Communist in his heart or not, I do not think that he will ever seriously consider escaping to the West for reasons which may become clearer in the following description. Vadim Solncev has bound his life to the Soviet system once and for all.

Vadim Solncev is now in his late fifties. Solidly built and more than average in height, Vadim Solncev is a rather attractive man with an impressive face, attentive eyes and nothing obnoxious in his appearance, his manner of dress or his gestures. He can be soft and mild. He can be quite rigid and strict without being rude. He has a rather pleasant voice and appreciates humor. To some extent, he likes literature and poetry. Solncev has a good family. His wife, Nina, is his colleague in linguistics, Chinese studies and the Institute. They have two children who are about thirty years old at this time. The family has a number of good friends. Apparently Vadim and Nina are fond of parties, dancing, tasty food and good wine, but never indulge in these to the excess. Naturally, their circle of friends is closed and well-chosen. Until recently, Vadim and Nina liked to discuss various subjects, but of

course they do not want somebody to wash their dirty linen in public or have their private thoughts discussed by other people.

I saw Vadim Solncev for the first time in my life in September 1947, when I became a freshman at the Moscow Oriental Institute. Students I knew at that time were often talking about Vadim and I saw him quite often in the Institute, in the subway or streetcar, and at the Young Communist League meetings. He was one year older than myself, but he looked like a grown-up person compared to many of my classmates. He studied Chinese, which was, of course, difficult, but very fashionable at that time due to the Chinese Revolution headed by Mao and the enormously rapid developments in that huge Far-Eastern country.

At that time Vadim was not yet a Party member, but his activity in the Young Communist League could not be overlooked, and the Chinese studies students were slightly cautious about his Komsomol enthusiasm. He was always a member of Young Communist League Bureaus and Committees, but very rarely was he the secretary of these organizations. He was able to combine his social activities with serious studies and he was considered among those who knew Chinese excellently. While in the second year of his studies, he taught Chinese to freshmen.

In the first years of his college studies he established tender relationships with Nina, a very attractive young lady from a well-established family of a Soviet statesman, and it was clear to everybody from the beginning of their relationship that they made a good couple. Always dressed up in those years, when a good shirt and new trousers aroused envious feelings in many, they were obviously alien to anxieties of this kind. Perhaps, they spoke in Chinese with each other in their intimate moments. They were involved in scholarly activities rather early and had various supervisors, including N. Korotkov and, later on, academician N.I. Konrad. At that time, the domination of N.Ja. Marr's lunatic linguistic concepts was drawing to the end, although Solncev was quite comfortable with Marr's Yaphetic theory and Stalin's own revelations in linguistics in 1950 were welcomed by the young couple, who were straightforwardly proceeding along the way of their "academic" career. The academic career at that time presupposed an undefiled Russian ethnic background and a good social face, and although Nina never joined the Party ranks herself, their career showed much promise because of their agreement with the officially supported linguistic theories that were enriched by Stalin's "great discoveries". In the mid-1950's, when Stalin's theories were somewhat downplayed, Vadim Solncev used to repeat Nikolaj Konrad's words that the essential aspects of Stalin's works in linguistics were simply "common sense".

Around the beginning of 1950 in the Moscow Oriental Institute

different ideological campaigns took place against the so-called "cosmopolitans" and against all kinds of deviations from the main political line. In the Chinese Department, where its three hundred students were going through the five years of mandatory education, the Young Communist League Bureau launched a formidable campaign to denounce one brilliant student, Michail Maksimov, who had been involved in a chain of unforgivable "crimes", for which he had to be punished as a Young Communist. A war veteran, Maksimov had lived for a few years with a nurse who took care of him while he lay wounded in a hospital during the war. However, he did not want to marry her and she sent a written complaint to his Komsomol organization, denouncing him for his betrayal because by this time he had fallen in love with an intelligent and good-looking classmate, whom he was planning to marry. When Young Communists were digging up Maksimov's past, some new and "horrifying crimes" were unearthed. Before World War Two young Maksimov had dared to read such a venomous and ideologically unacceptable philosopher as Friedrich Nietzsche and in a couple of letters from his military training camp, he wrote some nasty words about other Soviet soldiers who, he said, reminded him of a manure heap. For these "crimes" the Young Communist League Bureau, with the instigation and blessings of the Oriental Institute's Communist Party Committee, decided to expel Maksimov from the Komsomol and from the Institute, despite the pregnancy of his young fiancé. These were the worst years of Stalin's rule and the repeated Komsomol meetings, attended by about a thousand students of the Institute, were by no means a joke. Maksimov was virtually on the edge of being imprisoned.

Being present at various meetings while this case was discussed and rediscussed with the personal participation of Maksimov, I was rather frightened by the mere fact that I myself was involved in reading Nietzsche, whose books could be read in the library at the circulation desks. Among many speakers denouncing Maksimov I distinctly remember Vadim Solncev, who appeared to have been his close friend for a few years. In those years, each of us had close friends, with whom we were engaged in heated and boiling discussions about the world we lived in, and each of us, at this or another moment of his or her life, said enough to be put on trial like the one that was being arranged for Maksimov. Vadim Solncev's speech at the Komsomol meeting shocked me to the core of my spiritual being. When Maksimov, pale and exhausted, stood in front of his former friends and seemed to be praying to God that the cup of imprisonment may pass away from him, Vadim Solncev made one of his remarkable and impressive speeches: "Maksimov was my close friend, and I was continuously impressed by his erudition, his eloquence and his

personality. But now, when all the facts of his former life have been unfolded, my blindness towards Maksimov's negative features no longer exists. I blame myself for befriending Maksimov whose behavior has been properly qualified by our Komsomol body. I no longer consider him as my friend. Renouncing our friendly ties, I wholeheartedly support this denunciation of Maksimov's unworthy actions which are so incompatible with membership in the Young Communist League."

Like Dmitry Karamazov, thunderstruck by the words of his brother Ivan, I said to myself: "Well, I will keep this speech in my mind!" From that moment, our relationships virtually ceased for many years. Until 1957, Vadim Solncev taught Chinese in the Moscow Institute of International Relationships and although I often met his close friend Jurij Rožděstvenskij, I was not in touch with Vadim. By that time, Solncev and Rožděstvenskij had a serious clash with some leading faculty members of their Chinese Department and when they were defeated, they left the Institute and were welcomed by Georgij P. Serdjučenko, a fledgling of Stalin's regime and its victim, in the academic Oriental Institute. A son of a repressed priest, a member of the Party himself, a person who had sent an impressive number of prominent scholars to another world, Georgij Serdjucenko did not foresee the events connected with his invitation of Vadim Solncev to be his assistant.

Serdjučenko was a charlatan in linguistics. Since Stalin died and was taken to task by the Party, Serdjučenko, who had saved his life only by hiding himself in remote corners of far-away China, did not miss a single chance to criticize Stalin after his death for his "thin booklet in linguistics". While his future depended upon Serdjučenko's patronage, Vadim Solncev flattered his boss as much as he could to the degree of losing face. At open Party meetings, where I was occasionally present, Vadim Solncev said that Stalin had been a curse for the Soviet people and for the Party as well. Serdjučenko did not dislike these words, although he himself established a dictatorial regime in his own department.

After three or four years of work in the Oriental Institute, Vadim Solncev was elected as the secretary of the Institute Party Committee. This was a highly responsible position for this political institution but his ambitions grew and he began to see himself as a Deputy Director of the Oriental Institute with Babajan Gafurov at the head. He also simultaneously schemed to replace Serdjučenko at his top position in the department. A number of discussions were convened; Georgij Serdjučenko ultimately failed to endure the pressure and in 1966 he died from a heart attack. He was buried solemnly to the externally distinguished sorrow and the hidden joy of his recent subordinates. In

addition to being appointed as Gafurov's deputy, Solncev also became the head of the Linguistics Department, which was among the two other prominent linguistic institutions in Moscow.

From the late 1950's until 1968, I was able to observe him closely on many occasions. I was listening to his course on linguistics while I was in my PhD program and I became quite friendly with his closest friend. Around this time, with my wife, I visited Mukačevo, hidden among the Transcarpathian mountains. This predominantly Roman Catholic area, with its still existing churches, the Russian Orthodox nunnery, picturesque landscape, open markets and abundant food, was in sharp contrast to our Russian rural deterioration and poverty. Vadim had his own car and had stayed in Transcarpathia with his family for some time before our trip. After our journey we had a chance to exchange our impressions about Transcarpathia. His eyes were glittering with joy. His wife, Nina, who happened to hear our short conversation said happily: "It was like being in a magic world!"

This exchange of our impressions occurred soon after the political seminar directed by Vadim, where I was forced to participate. I had to submit my PhD thesis and since I was a non-Party member, I thought that it would be tactically expedient to agree to talk about recent developments in the Communist world. In 1962, in a rather small group chaired by Vadim, I delivered a talk which was a letter-by-letter reproduction of M. Suslov's report on this matter. My trick consisted of reading my written text without raising my eyes from it and without adding any word of my own. I wonder what Solncev was thinking about while I was reading my text. Perhaps the text fell on his deaf ears, because it is unthinkable to listen to that balderdash and try to discern its meaning. What amazed me, however, was the remark Vadim made before the group, saying that I had delivered an extremely interesting presentation. I thought this showed his simple sympathy for me, of which I was to become increasingly aware in the succeeding years.

Irritated by the activities of our structural linguistics group and its "methods of bourgeois science", Georgij Petrovič Serdjučenko announced his decision to close down our group and transfer us to other sectors. This was not in our real interests and at a large meeting, together with my colleagues, I resisted the efforts of our boss. In Stalin's time, I could have paid dearly, and my relationship with Serdjučenko could not be repaired after that; he demanded my head. Neither Solncev nor Gafurov agreed to give him such license.

A few weeks after that, I was hurrying to watch the splendid Polish film *The Ashes and the Diamond* by Andzej Wajda which had been banned in Russia for a number of years and was then showing to packed audiences. I had seen that film once before when it was shown to a

chosen audience and could not believe that this absolutely anti-Soviet and anti-Communist movie could be shown openly to a Soviet audience. My friends interpreted this gesture as another indication from the authorities of the great shifts in our society. By that time, Khrushchev had been ousted. However, my amazement was even greater when, during my last-minute arrival at the entrance of the movie theatre "Udarnik", I ran into both of the Solncevs as they were leaving the theatre. Though in a rush, I could not help seeing their excited and exhilirated faces. I could hardly believe my eyes! If our Party bosses liked such movies, what would we face in the nearest future? There was no need to ask them how they liked the film. They used superlatives in their answer. Since my relationships with Serdjučenko at this time were at their lowest and Solncev was climbing uphill, I asked him what he thought about Serdjučenko's decision to break up our group. Solncev's response was quick and decisive: "We consider that his decision is not regulation-based." For various reasons, his words cheered me up.

From time to time, Solncev and I met and talked. Being busy with his Party commitments, he attended one or two lectures of mine when I was asked to give a seminar on American linguistics. In our official face-to-face conversations, Solncev flattered me and said that I was a "thinking person". In the Institute, my desk was located near the desk of his wife and quite often we chatted in a friendly way. On one occasion, I said to her that in my convictions I was anti-Stalinist and she did not quarrel or disagree. Her husband himself had once publicly characterized Stalin's rule in the country as a disaster. At that time, these words could be uttered without grave implications. Another of my friends, Jurij Lekomcev told me that Solncev had gone to such lengths in conversations with him as to announce some principles of Marxism as outdated. My friends also told me that he was reading some unpublished manuscripts of Solzhenitsyn which were circulating among the intelligentsia. I had reasons to believe that in 1966-67, he was also listening to the highly explosive songs of Aleksandr Galich. On the 30th of November in 1966, our Institute committed an almost heroic deed by inviting Solzhenitsyn to speak in front of a large audience.[14] Solzhenitsyn read several chapters from his novels, and a good amount of his attention was devoted to the KGB and the problem of stool-pigeons. His appearance and his words had a tremendous impact on our audience. I do not remember whether the Solncevs were in the overcrowded hall on that already Winter night, but with their interest in Solzhenitsyn, they could not have ignored that event. In the Fall of 1967, Solncev helped the infamous Filin handle a large delegation of Soviet linguists at the International Congress in Budapest. Even there he behaved himself rather decently. I spent my time mainly

in meetings and conversations with my Western colleagues, and after our return home I was asked to address the members of our Department, along with other participants in the Congress. My speech could not have made Solncev entirely happy but, as the head of the Department, he, nevertheless, approved the decision to publish my monograph and not to place obstacles to my further promotion.

In the mid-1960's, Solncev suffered a serious heart attack. He had to be transported from his house to the hospital. Solncev was almost hopeless. As far as I can remember, he lived on the third floor and his house did not have an elevator. He could not get up himself and I was among the four members of the Department who were asked to carry him on a strecher down the stairs into the ambulance car. Solncev was heavy and difficult to carry. But it was much more discouraging and sad to see his pale face, his sobbing wife and his children. Death was hovering over their family. In those hours in which I was busy bringing him to the hospital, I felt real compassion toward him. Almost every day, I saw his wife and tried to console her in her grief and was indeed happy when his health finally took a turn for the better.

In those crucial 1964-67 years I was not overly optimistic. One could not overlook many regrettable aspects in our life. Perhaps the worst was the downfall of Nikita Khrushchev and the Party leadership's attempts to whitewash the image of Joseph Stalin, defiled so much by their own recent Party Congresses. Many people, including Party members, were enraged by these attempts to restore Stalin's "clean image". Those years were highly critical in my life for many reasons, including the one that I had decided to express at least on one occasion, in the most serious terms, my indignation with the intrigues aimed at bringing back the Stalinism revered by many influential Party members, as well as with the repressions launched against a number of freethinkers. As a matter of fact, I could not afford to be silent; my faith demanded me to speak out. It was a painful state for my soul to feel bottled up and unable to seek release. However, I tried to weigh my chances of surviving in the system and of preserving my scholarly status in the Academy of Sciences. I was encouraged by a chain of considerations which I am not going to elaborate in detail now, although it would suffice to mention at least a number of these features. Among them were: the warmer relationship with the West, the growing role and creativity of the intelligentsia in the country; a number of its vocal protests that had been swallowed by the authorities; the divisions in the top ranks of the Party oligarchy; the attempts on the part of the Party's liberal wing to encourage the intelligentsia to speak out; and the rather timid attempts of the KGB to tame the growing protest movement.

In my former Oriental Institute, where Vadim Solncev worked as a

Deputy Director, almost twenty-five persons signed various petitions which defied the government's repressions. I thought that in case of emergency these colleagues of mine would speak out on my own behalf, for under those circumstances, to defend your own colleagues unambiguously meant to defend yourself. But among various considerations which provided me with some hope, there were also some thoughts connected with the personality of Vadim Solncev. How will he react when it becomes known that I have made a strong statement to defy the repressions? I was not naive enough to expect him to defend me in public. He was a bureaucrat and would not support me openly under any conditions! However, he belonged to a generation of people who knew about the injustices of Stalin, although they were happy not to have experienced them on their own skin, and he often repeated anti-Stalinist statements. With his open liberal leanings and statements about outdated Marxist principles, with his implicit support for me and even for the sake of purely superstitious fears that one should refrain from any irreversible actions against a person who has helped you while you were in mortal danger, would he fight against me or would he prefer to cover up my actions without putting his own position into jeopardy? I was never impressed by his scholarly achievements and discoveries. Although, at some stage, I did not attend his lectures in linguistics, I could not ignore the fact that he had no clear idea about some ordinary notions in modern linguistics and science. But at least he was not a charlatan like Georgij Serdjučenko or Trofim Lysenko. There was some dignity around him and he had some love for poetry and literature.

Beginning with the 5th of December in 1965, I participated in a number of manifestations and protest campaigns against the repressions. I sent my personal letter and signed several protest petitions. All of this was done to no avail. On February 24, 1968, I signed the petition to the Consultative Meeting of the Communist Parties at Budapest which was then sent abroad.[15] On the 28th of the same month, it was printed in the leading newspapers of the world and by the end of the same day was beamed back to Russia. The next morning in the Institute, Il'juša Gabaj told me about the broadcast. Our protest was unprecedentedly challenging and defied the Party's policy of repressions. It was signed altogether by twelve people, including the Major-General Petr Grigorenko, Petr Jakir, and Larisa Bogoraz. For me it was clear that there would be serious repercussions, but how would the government and the Party react to these protests? I could not sit at my desk and left the Institute to stroll along the Moscow streets. I visited the Kremlin, its old cathedrals, and stood in front of the ancient tombs. I felt that I had done my duty. I had expressed my protest against the terror and the persecutions perpetrated by the Party system.

I tried to remain calm, but each cell of my body went through turmoil. I expected that anything could happen each hour, including arrest, imprisonment, and even murder. On the other hand, I also thought that nothing would occur to me.

When I returned to the Institute around half-past eleven, I was told that Vadim Solncev, the Deputy Director of the Institute and the Head of my Department, wanted to see me. In my further story I omit all the details not connected with Vadim Solncev, but one should say that the whole Institute was buzzing like a beehive. The majority of the Institute was discussing the latest news in their studies, passages and library and I caught glances they cast at me.

I entered Dr. Solncev's study and I found nothing extraordinary in his behavior and manners. He shook my hand and asked me to take a seat. But one could note some strain on his face. After a few polite questions about nothing, he asked me:

> Juri Jakovlevic, today several persons have told me that yesterday they have heard your name mentioned among the authors of a letter written in the context of enmity towards our country. They wondered whether it was really you and not someone else. I said to them that most probably it was the name of somebody else.

I knew almost by heart the content of the petition I signed, although I never heard this letter broadcast by the BBC and the Voice of America. I had not been listening to the foreign radio news in those days, but I knew them from my inside sources. In Solncev's first question I saw a trap. God knows in what exact capacity Solncev was now acting, but I was given a chance to deny my signature. "I think it is mine, Vadim Mikhajlovič", I answered. "The devilish efficiency!" Solncev exclaimed, while I was observing the expression on his face. I could not understand what exactly he meant by that, although his words could mean only one thing: he had already been informed by those who knew the details of my visit to Petr Jakir's apartment where the letter was signed five days earlier. I was myself astonished at the speed with which this letter had found its way to the world's newspapers and radio. But from what sources did Vadim know about it?

He asked me about the content of the letter and about my motives for signing it. I could guess that he himself was listening yesterday to the American radio and knew the content of our letter no less than myself. The letter, when I signed it, corresponded to my feelings and thoughts, but undoubtedly it had been written in very strong words for that time. Needless to say, Soviet radio or newspapers were not going to broadcast or print it until at least the end of the century and only in case of radical shifts in our society. A copy of the letter was in my

pocket but I thought that it would be wiser to paraphrase its contents in a softened manner, for, otherwise, one of us would have a heart attack. To read the letter in the office of your Department's chief and a Party boss was something quite different from listening to that letter broadcast by foreign radio.

In our almost one-hour-long conversation, I candidly recounted the reasons which had prompted me to sign it: Some people were persecuted for their convictions, put on trial without well-motivated charges, and confined to mental hospitals. Solncev was listening very attentively and, as it seemed to me, with some understanding of my position. Most probably, he could not properly understand all the circumstances around this mighty protest campaign of the intelligentsia and, having master-minded a number of administrative plots against his bosses, he still did not understand how an ordinary Soviet citizen in his right mind could sign such a terrifying document. With all the information he had already received from his hidden sources, he could surmise that there was some strong person near the top of the Kremlin hierarchy who had initiated the letter or sponsored it. I did not find it necessary to hide any facts from Solncev and mentioned that I personally knew some persons who signed this letter, although my inner voice warned me to avoid mentioning any names of those who had actually shown me the letter before I signed it. However, it was not at all in Solncev's intentions to know this. His manners were mild and he was quite satisfied with our conversation. Before leaving his office, I received his assurances that my promotion in the Department would proceed. We shook and parted.

A week passed after my first conversation with Solncev and I was somewhat consoled that no violent actions had been launched against me or my family. Then Solncev summoned me once more to his office and this time the conversation took on a more serious tone. He uttered a few meaningful phrases which noted that the letter I had signed was written in anti-Soviet terms and that our Director, Babajan Gafurov, expressed the view that in his Institute such letters could not be signed by his subordinates. He was interested, once again, to know how this letter had found its way into my hands. The state, in his words, should defend itself and he asked me whether I would consider disavowing my signature on the letter. I answered that each word in my letter was true, repeated the words of a Russian geneticist Nikolaj Vavilov "we shall step into the fire, shall burn, but never reject our words"[16], and expressed my conviction of being entitled to express my views. Gafurov's words concerning the rights of his subordinates to sign such letters did not necessarily sound like a threat to expel me from the Institute. Solncev knew the words he was using and our relationship became visibly cool although there was no unbridgeable gap between

us. I felt that Solncev had not received any clear-cut instructions from his superiors. According to my information, some of those who were supposed to decide our fate had not yet returned from their trips abroad.

The tension grew in the air. More than three weeks passed and nothing happened to me. I was finishing my monograph on the morphophonemics of ancient Tamil and continued giving my lectures at Moscow University. Finally, they made a decision on the higher Party level. On the 20th of March, my wife Marina was leaving the University after her late evening classes and my acquaintance, Lev Koncevič, a new member of the Party on the editorial staff of the Institute's leading journal, was waiting for her outside the building and obviously in hiding. In his words, on the previous day, there had been a large meeting of the Institute's Party activists and a representative of the Moscow City Party Committee had recalled the recent protest campaign and reported that the Party leadership had come to the conclusion that under the circumstances of the current international relationships, it would be inexpedient to emprison the protesters, but that they would be re-educated. At the same meeting of Party activists, Vadim Solncev had made a speech in which he specifically mentioned my name as one of those fellows in the Institute whose name had been mentioned by the Voice of America. In Lev's words, the meeting obviously signified our moral victory and the authorities' inability to deal with us harshly. Looking all the time around himself, Lev advised me through Marina to behave prudently and cautiously, without igniting the wrath of the Party superiors.

We had been acquainted with Lev Koncevič for almost twenty years. Until the mid-1960's, I was of the opinion that he was a nice person. He was not a Jew, but there was something wrong in his biography from the official point of view, for he was unable to become a scholarly member of the Institute despite his various publications in linguistics. He was not exceptionally bright and amazed me in the mid-1960's by joining the Communist Party. It did not strike me that in my presence he had never mentioned a word about his intention to join the Party. Of course, in his mid-thirties, he was aware that his decision was not going to decorate his hat with another feather. However, I will never forget that only a few weeks before I found out that he became a Party member we had a lunch in the "Berlin" restaurant in the company of four other colleagues. As usual, there was an exchange of recent jokes. The joke I told was this one: In a brothel, a girl named Maša was offered the opportunity to join the Party. She burst out sobbing and resisted the offer. "My mother", she said, "did not want to give me permission even to join this place, but for sure she will never allow me to join the Party." Everybody, including Lev and another colleague of mine who was a Party member himself, appreciated the joke. A few

weeks later, it came to my attention that Lev had applied for Party membership. Reconsidering his role in the events described here, I find it extremely dubious and I am almost convinced now that Lev had been instructed to disinform me lest I make another vocal public statement.

In the next few days, the Party leadership of the Institute convened a closed Party meeting of the Linguistics Department. Babajan Gafurov was present at this Party meeting and personally checked that thirty or so Party members of the Department should vote adequately for my expulsion from the Oriental Institute. There was no paragraph in the Constitution of the Academy of Sciences which warrants expulsion of its members, but this time, neither Babajan Gafurov nor Solncev gave any serious thought to academic regulations. The appearance at the Party meeting of Gafurov himself was the best insurance for its unanimous decision and the Party members did not even raise the question about my presence at their meeting. The Party secretary of the Department, Jurij Gorgoniev, on one occasion asked me to say what had motivated me to sign the letter and I discoursed briefly concerning my convictions. But to defend my position was difficult. Besides the absolutely challenging content of the petition, which protested the mistreatment of political prisoners in Russia and demanded the return of the Crimean Tartars out of their exile to their native area, the members of the Communist Party were visibly shocked and apalled by the fact that the letter was sent to the Consultative Meeting of the Communist Parties outside of Russia. It did not matter that the Consultative Meeting was an assembly of Communists who got together in a capital of a fraternal socialist country or that a copy of our petition was also sent to the Kremlin. Our letter, sent formally to a Communist meeting, was interpreted as a complaint against the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party and the Party members of the Institute treated me as if I were an accomplished enemy of the people. One could only be amazed that I had not yet been jailed and that so many busy people were obliged to deal with my case.

Within three weeks after I signed the petition, Dr. Vadim Solncev was able to evaluate the situation connected with my past and future. He had a series of conversations with his Party superiors and it became perfectly clear to him that no influential Party groups or state security scheme was behind our action. By that time, incidentally, a certain number of Muscovites thought, not without the assistance of the KGB, that I was in reality an *agent provocateur*, from whom one had better stay away. For several months in our Institute, one could see at least several outsiders who were observing what was going on in its corridors and who was speaking with whom. I assume that during these weeks, Vadim Solncev was adequately advised by state security officials about the situation of the protest campaign in the country and

those two dozen petitioners who worked at the Institute. The Central Party Committee launched a country-wide campaign against the petitioners and Solncev had received all the relevant instructions. In other institutes, some Party officials made attempts to soften the blows by one or another trick so as to save their colleagues. Solncev came to the conclusion that nothing could save me from expulsion from the Academy. Naturally, there was a lot of pressure upon Gafurov and Solncev from superior levels, but they did not belong to those who could risk their careers and comforts for the sake of some abstract ideals. By this time, he felt considerable consternation toward me because my behavior had placed him in hot water and now he had to save himself by drowning me.

My friends informed me about what Solncev had said concerning me and the content of our letter and these news by no means encouraged me. If any hopes for Solncev's decent behavior had ever existed earlier, they were now extinguished. The conversations we had in the days succeeding my signing of the letter had very little effect upon him. Our past relationships "never existed". His doubts concerning the validity of Marxist principles were erased. When his close friends made a public scandal for his wife, Nina, charging that they behaved like villains oblivious of their recent *samizdat* readings and discussions of Solzhenitsyn, Nina's response was that no one was expected to bring what belonged to the gossip of the kitchen into the world's public forum. At the Party meetings, Solncev said that in our letter we wrote as if the Soviet prisons were overcrowded with political prisoners, while the letter mentioned a few thousand political prisoners. My convictions were qualified as anti-Soviet and my vision as apolitical. The Institute Party leaders let their subordinates know that I might be arrested for my statements and somehow I was grateful that in their attempts to defile me, they did not go even further.

I was almost convinced that the fruits of my ordeal did not depend upon me any longer. I did not want to discuss my letter any longer and I thought it was so vocal and impressive that I earned my right to keep silent for a while. Although perplexed and cautious, Gafurov and Solncev did not altogether lose their intention to break my spirit. My former adviser, Evgenij P. Čelyšev, who had treated me warmly for years, through several attempts aroused in me the hope that a candid conversation with Gafurov would help save my scholarly future at the Institute. Evgenij P. Čelyšev kept on assuring me that Babajan Gafurov was waiting for my visit.

When I entered the office of Babajan Gafurov and spoke with his secretary, Gafurov was not in a hurry to meet me, although these were his office hours. He assigned me a time for our meeting in a few days and as soon as I entered his spacious office I understood that they had

set a snare to entrap me. I was assured that Babajan Gafurov would be glad to speak with me *tête-à-tête*, but in the same room with Babajan Gafurov there were two of his deputies, Solncev and Achramovič, one of their Party Committee's representatives who was in close touch with the KGB, and a fourth person who entered his office during our conversation without being introduced to me. This was another man from the KGB. Gafurov was strained. In my few words I let him know that I was not going to withdraw from my views expressed in the letter, but I asked him to help me retain my scholarly position in the university. He made an attack against me which should be described separately, and Solncev contributed solidly to this offensive. Vadim Solncev remarked at the beginning of the conversation, which very much resembled ones in the Lubianka, that I had been taken in by my associates who had authored the letter. "I do not know about other Institutes, but in our Institute one cannot sign any letter", Gafurov said and rebuked me for having signed the letter with what he called "repressed persons". When the question about the Crimean Tartars was raised, he dropped an enigmatic phrase: "They cannot be returned back to the Crimea, near the Turkish border; they have the same faith (*odna vera*)." Our conversation was not too long and Gafurov ended it with a note, "We have to think (*Nado podumat'*)." These words, whose ambiguity would soon be resolved, gave me some hope that as they would think, I would continue my reflections as well.

Three minutes after I left Gafurov's office, Solncev found me in the library and invited me to continue the conversation now solely with him. The main message of this conversation was Babajan Gafurov's suggestion that I should think it all over and give my final answer by tomorrow morning. It was already rather late - about seven o'clock in the evening. Our conversation with Solncev touched some other points. On that day, in the aftermath of crucial student disorders in Poland, Wladislav Gomulka made a lengthy speech which was published in *Pravda*.[17] Vadim's comment was sharp: "Those Poles, who had been forgiven by the government earlier, have now created all these disorders and manifestations." The thought implicit in Solncev's words was: "Do not forgive!"

The succeeding night was one of my worst. In my thoughts I tried my best to save my scholarly future in the Academy of Sciences, but I saw that this could be achieved only by the loss of my face and my integrity. Around nine o'clock, I was in Solncev's study. In the beginning, some phrases about the announced death of Yuri Gagarin were made and after that he asked me what conclusion I had reached. I said that I could not go further than what I had said yesterday in Gafurov's room. Solncev feigned to remain indifferent, but he was visibly disappointed. "I expressed my opinion in this letter, discharged

my inner tension and worries", I said, "and now I really want to concentrate on my studies of the ancient world."

Solncev's reaction to my words is worth noting: "Well, the letter you have signed was heard approximately (he was silent, counting) ... by thirty million people in this country. You have to be taken to task for this. The state must defend itself."

Our conversation was over and in a few days Vadim Solncev, together with the Party Committee, headed by Igor Latyšev and Jurij Kazakevič, arranged a Trade Union Committee Meeting. The meeting was preceded by the Party officials' lengthy conversations with almost each member of the Trade Union Committee. Solncev played a leading role before and during the Committee's meeting by threatening and frightening those members of the Committee with whom I was on speaking terms for many years. At this meeting I was given a clear choice: to write a letter rejecting the fuss aroused in the world around our petition which would be published in a central newspaper like *Izvestia*, or be expelled from the Institute for my political views. I rejected this offer. Four persons voted against my expulsion and two abstained. The other eight voted for my expulsion. Solncev was furious. They could not force two-thirds of the Trade Union Committee to vote against me. He had also failed to inform the Moscow City Party Committee that this important session regarding the "outsiders", as we were called, did not secure the recantation of one of their scholarly fellows.

The sword of Damocles could fall upon my head any day. Instructed by Gafurov and other invisible advisors, Solncev was going to convene the secret Enlarged Scholarly Meeting in defiance of all Academic regulations. A few days prior to this crucial day in my life, I entered Solncev's office and we had a short conversation: "According to what paragraph of the Academic Regulations are you going to expel me?", I asked. "I am not a lawyer, I don't know the laws. But you have to be expelled." After a few seconds of silence, he added: "We should have a serious conversation about your future." "When do you want this conversation to take place, before my expulsion or after?" "After", he said and I left his room.

On Holy Thursday, March 25 of 1968, I was asked to come to Gafurov's office where I saw that the members of the Enlarged Scholarly Council were briefed about the details of my "crime". I was not invited in and waited at the table in the big entrance room. At that moment I understood that they were hurrying to convene that Enlarged Scholarly Council and when they started to leave Gafurov's office passing me one by one, I felt that my court trial had come.

Solncev left Gafurov's office and shook my hand in a manner that had some special significance and invited me to the hall downstairs.

When I entered that hall I saw some forty or forty-five members of the Enlarged Scholarly Council. Almost all of them were Party members. Babajan Gafurov chaired the meeting which reminded me of a criminal gang's assembly. Vadim Solncev was asked to give the main presentation. He described my letter and the thousands of political prisoners mentioned in it and noted my apolitical vision. He also said that from the professional point of view there were no grudges against me, although from the political standpoint I could not be allowed to work in the Academic Institute. Omitting many other details, I should say that once more I caught him saying that our letter referred to thousands instead of several thousand political prisoners. I was amazed that Solncev blushed at these words of mine. I was expelled from the Institute and since that time we did not meet, although we have been tracing each other's fates.

Shortly after my expulsion, Solncev said to his subordinates: "We shall now crush the Czechoslovakian dissent, and after that we shall exterminate our own Czechoslovakia." He was engaged in a series of expulsions of other members from the Institute and also promoted to deputy editor-in-chief of the leading Soviet journal *The Problems of Linguistics*, working hand in hand with Filin, a notorious hatchetman. Two years later, when my friends convinced Anastas Mikoyan, the retired President of the Soviet Union, to call Gafurov and ask him to restore my position at the Institute, Mikoyan's solicitation was not heeded. At that time, Solncev said that even if Gafurov wanted to welcome me back to the Institute, he would have still resisted the move.

After Gafurov's death, Solncev did not become the Director of the Oriental Institute. But his ambitious schemes are far-reaching. Undoubtedly, he will climb further up the ladder of the Soviet Party edifice. With sadness I recall him and think about his ascent to his relatively powerful post. He was not so bad. He did not kill people personally. He is not anti-Semitic. His great friend, Jurij Plam, is a Jew. He is a Russian who seems to like his own culture and nevertheless one could still ask oneself what has happened to him during these forty years. He was a man who knew about Stalin's rule and spoke about it in public meetings, who had read Solzhenitsyn's books and listened to popular, officially disapproved, songs, who has been many times abroad and who privately said that many principles of Marxist theory have become outdated! From time to time miracles take place but I have almost lost any hope that people like Vadim Solncev, and there are many of them, will understand the criminal, disgusting nature of their own actions and social behavior and turn to the better side of spiritual existence.

Gafurov and Solncev are the Party members entitled to supervise the world of Moscow orientalists. Their figures are not very colorful

though quite thought-provoking. During the Summer of 1987, Solncev visited several American universities as the head of a Soviet delegation and, of course, he whole-heartedly supports the current *perestrojka*, launched by Gorbachev.

Among Moscow's Party members who will not be forgotten soon, we should also mention a person who has been responsible throughout many post-Stalinist years for the Moscow Union of Authors. His name is Viktor Nikolaevič Il'in, a KGB general, mentioned by Solzhenitsyn in *The Calf and the Oak*, and portrayed by Vladimir Maksimov in his last book, *Farewell From Nowhere*.[18]

Since the early 1960's, Viktor Il'in was responsible for the Moscow Union of Authors. By that time he was around sixty years old, had thin hair, and a fat feminine face and eyes which made him look like a predatory cat. Looking at such people, one could think that their hand would not tremble while holding a gun and shooting their victim. In Stalin's time, he became a general of the state security forces, working zealously under the leadership of the well-known Abakumov, who was executed after 1953. In Il'in's words, after he had disobeyed an order to betray a close friend of his youth, he had been summoned to Abakumov's office, where the minister read to his former subordinate, Viktor Il'in, an attorney general's decree for his arrest. In Abakumov's presence, another Georgian general was removing Il'in's military regalia from his shoulders and, when the arrested Il'in requested Abakumov to take care of this case personally, the Georgian general asked him: "Do you not trust, Viktor, our state security?"

The same Il'in told Maksimov later on that Abakumov was a good guy and an experienced serviceman in the Soviet state security, although he had one weakness. He used to arrive early in the morning at the State Security Ministry, drink one or two glasses of cognac and then, loaded, order brought from their prison cells those female inmates who had entered the Communist Party before the Bolshevik Revolution, had them undressed and then himself whipped them with a three-tail lash.[19]

According to his own story, Viktor Il'in was confined for eight long years in a solitary prison cell. His wife, a scientist, married another man. He did not blame her. They had two daughters and she had no other choice. In the mid-1950's, he was released from prison, but not allowed to live in Moscow. He settled in Ryazan, a hundred miles from the capital. Alone, without kinship, with his former wife far away and married to another man and with his family ruined, he did not want to drop by his old friends' houses so as not to hurt their reputation. In his old age, he found a job at a railroad station, loading heavy goods. He thought that this would be for good, but his "friends"

found him after some time and gave him a chance to rejoin the Party. As a trusted person, he was restored to his former rank, promoted to responsible positions and, after a while, became lauded as the main supervisor and benefactor of the huge team of Moscow's authors.

He was not an ordinary bureaucrat. He liked his job. He kept simple and friendly relationships with a hundred writers of Moscow, who were far from being obedient, disciplined, and orderly. Many of them had never joined the Party. They were drinking heavily and their family life was not always stable. While drinking and talking to each other, they used to brawl and fistfight, and they often babbled and twaddled that he should release them from the militia's hands as well as from the mental hospitals. Many of them were sent abroad to show the high level of the Soviet arts and they were constantly meeting foreign dignitaries and celebrities. With these poets and writers one ought to be wise, polite and strict. One must know each of them through the network of stool-pigeons and informers. These were persons endowed with gifts and talents and Il'in was responsible for all of them and he was the right person in the right place. The figure of Viktor Il'in, a KGB general supervising hundreds of leading Soviet authors showed once again the enormous flexibility of the Soviet authorities and the Party's eyes and ears.

Promoted to a new high position, Il'in lived modestly. He distributed Winter and Summer residences or dachas among poets and writers but never took anything from these resources for himself. Some people thought that he had earned his right to these comforts, for he had been confined in prison for many years and his simple three-room apartment in Moscow was too tiny for himself, his two daughters and his wife who was a prominent scientist. Other bosses like himself could publish several books written for them by numerous servile and obsequious scribes and ghost-writers; but he did not. He was not considered to be an author, unlike many others, including Leonid Brezhnev. He could have discharged many drunkards from the Union, but he invariably helped them and saved them from desperate situations. Through Il'in's efforts, Jurij Dombrovskij, a writer, drunkard, former prisoner and a person of radical anti-Soviet views, received a very decent apartment.

The history of his relationships with Vlad Samsonov, who is undoubtedly Vladimir Maksimov himself, reveals Il'in's nature and character. Samsonov, a talented young author, was introduced to Il'in by Stepan Ščipačev[20], a poet and the Writers' Union's Party functionary who is said to have been responsible for the death of many honest writers and authors. By the time Il'in was acquainted with Samsonov, he knew almost everything about him. As the Party's soldier in the battlefield, as he modestly characterized himself, he knew

that Samsonov was not yet a member of the Writers' Union, although his first book had been published in 1956 in the Caucasus. He knew that another novel of his had been recently published in a well-known volume, although one seriously criticized by the Party press, and that Samsonov had written another prose piece which he wanted to be discussed by the Union's group. He also knew that Samsonov had been recently summoned to the KGB and advised to help found a new Party-sponsored young writers' body. Being prepared to help the young and impoverished author financially, the polite and exceedingly sweet-mannered Viktor Il'in reminded Vlad Samsonov, peering into his eyes with a wild cat's gloating, that he should forever forget the illusion that Soviet power has not penetrated some of the big country's distant ends where a person could intend to hide himself: "Soviet power, dear Vlad, is here and everywhere."[21]

Vladimir Maksimov describes how one step after the other, Viktor Il'in, in co-operation with the Party, the KGB officials and agents established an efficient and sophisticated network of surveillance over the young authors, keeping them and their work under control. After the frustrated efforts of another Party gangster, Vsevolod Kočetov, to recruit Vlad Samsonov for their team which defended the Soviet invasion of Prague, Samsonov left Moscow to write his new novel which was smuggled abroad for publication. Besides that, in the last year of the 1960's, he signed a petition which had been broadcast by foreign radio. Samsonov preferred to stay away from Il'in's omniscient presence, but Il'in called him and advised him to show up in his office. When Samsonov turned up in front of his desk, he drew a secret file from his table's drawer with the petition signed by Samsonov.[22] He was not much interested in the content of the petition which demanded fair procedures in a trial of dissidents, but he took Samsonov to task for the way these petitions had reached the West and were broadcast by the foreign radio before they even reached the Soviet Government, to which the petition was addressed, and which never condescended to answer them. And then he asked Samsonov: "Do you not trust, Vlad, our state security?", forgetting for a moment that a few years earlier, he had related his ordeal to Samsonov and told him how the Georgian general posed him the same question at the moment of his own arrest. When Samsonov reminded him of this, the general paled, turned grey and then with an entirely different expression said: "That was a different time, Samsonov, quite a different time. Don't compare them. What has been has gone and will never come again!" "Is that so, Viktor Nikolaevič? How can we be sure of that?"

This question reminded Il'in of too many sad things in his past and he dismissed Samsonov from his office and sent him to a writer's recreation house for free. Was he annoyed by this conversation and did

the bitter thoughts about his solitary prison-cell years once again harass him ruthlessly? Did he really believe that the worst times would never return? Did he want to extend his kindness and generosity towards the penniless Samsonov or did he want, as an experienced state-security man, to keep a keen eye on Samsonov while he would stay under surveillance in a Latvian sanatorium, like Mandel'stam in Samatikha prior to his arrest?[23]

But when Vlad's new novel was published abroad and his time-bomb had thus exploded, Viktor Il'in had another unpleasant conversation with the author. After Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov made their appearances before world public opinion, Vlad's novel seemed to announce another great event in the post-Stalinist break-through of the human soul in self-knowledge and self-expression. Vlad's novel was published in an undisguisedly anti-Soviet publishing house in Germany and rendered another tangible blow to the Soviet ideology. The KGB General Viktor Il'in, in the eyes of the Party and the authorities, had let a major anti-Party action pass right under his nose.

When the General saw Vlad outside of his office, with his ostensible professional indifference, he invited him for a final explanation:

> So, Samsonov, dear Comrade, you've made up your mind to put everything at risk, to receive all medals, or to lose your head on the scaffold. Oh, you appeared not to be as simple as you seemed, an open-minded guy, of the same breed as factory workers and villagers, a person with deep working class roots, and all the time you were digging a deep pit without the beat of a drum. Well, *cher ami*, you will fall into your own pit and we shall wipe you off the map. We have smashed to smithereens fellows stronger than you. You don't know with whom you have come to fight ... But I did know about you, about your dubious talks and I have been informed about your slogans and the anti-Soviet scent that is spread from you for a mile around! I thought that you are still young, you should boil over, that your tongue is fouled by vodka ... But it now appears that you have not even hidden your schemes, that you have taken me in, an old time state security man. Well, thanks for the lesson. As they say, live and learn! [24]

A few months later, when Vlad came to General Il'in once again in order to make a deal with Soviet power, the General revealed his real nature. After his book was published abroad and Vlad was frightened at the prospect of an émigré's future, he made an offer to Il'in, a representative of the Soviet system: Vlad would not publish any other works abroad and in return they would leave him in peace and provide a

minimum to keep his body and soul together. When the general was informed about Vlad's visit, he rushed outside his office to welcome his guest with a show of openness. Undoubtedly, he expected that Vlad had come as a prodigal son, beating his breast, and sobbing in repentance. But, when he understood what his visitor was saying, he frowned and cut him off abruptly and impatiently: "Well, Samsonov, did you seriously think that Soviet power would negotiate with you? Look at this high negotiating power!" Il'in raised his fist and struck the table with great force.

> Soviet power has only one conversation with individuals like yourself: Down on your knees! Then Soviet power will decide what should be done to you, to execute you or to pardon you - clear? Soviet power never negotiates with anybody. Soviet power issues its orders and decisions, but does not acknowledge any other form of negotiation with its enemy!" And having grinned with fatigue, he finished: "I thought you were more intelligent.[25]

Such is the old Party member, Viktor N. Il'in, a man with relatively high responsibility for an important cornerstone facet of Soviet ideological life. To a certain degree, this position was created specially for him. He is absolutely fit for this role. Il'in is the vigilant, non-sleeping watchdog of the Soviet Party machinery. He is devoted to the Party with his whole heart and mind and one cannot deny that he is smart, hard-working, and willing to fight for the Soviet system to the end. He is well-aware of its cruelty. He sees well that his sub-ordinates, the young poets and writers, should sell their souls to the devil in order to serve the regime. But there is no other choice. He knows that from his own experience. He did not want to betray his friend, but he had to care for his family, his children, his established reputation. The world outside the Soviet system is the world of foes and adversaries with whom one should fight for dear life. The way he had been moulded allows him to serve only the Soviet system. Virtually a professional torturer and hatchetman, he has no other profession which could feed him and his family under other social conditions. It may sound strange and controversial, but General Viktor Il'in, from a certain point of view, is more decent and honest than hundreds of those who would be happy to replace him in this position or to be elevated to such important posts.

The list of Party-carded cut-throats, working in various fields of the arts and sciences, is practically endless. We shall bring up only some of these names. Among the most impressive Party members, one should perhaps single out Aleksandr I. Ovčarenko. For many years this gentleman has been working in the well-known Moscow Institute

of World Literature (IMLI), and his brilliant career has been described by N. Janevič, a Party member herself, in her historical outline of the IMLI.[26] He owed his career to S.M. Petrov, who had been formally expelled from the Party in the mid-1950's for having founded a brothel for high Party officials which included the minister of culture, G.F. Aleksandrov[27], but afterwards was restored to the Party and appointed as a deputy director of the IMLI. Aleksandr Ovčarenko entered S.M. Pavlov's team of those who were ready to perform all services. In the 1950's, he had scarcely managed to avoid a Party investigation of his shameless deeds during Stalin's reign, but he survived on account of his mysterious friends in the Party Central Committee and the KGB. In 1964, Ovčarenko, who lacked elementary literary and critical talents, was appointed editor-in-chief of the new thirty-volume academic edition of Maxim Gorky's works. In the widely read Soviet press he announced that "everything that had been written by Gorky will be published"[28]; but, needless to say, there was no attempt on his part to reprint many of Gorky's works, including the sharp-tongued and absolutely anti-Leninist *Untimely Thoughts*, written around the time of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. No doubt, in the future we will know more about the notes, written in the last years of his life and confiscated by state security immediately after Gorky's death. One can say for sure that Ovčarenko will try his best to hide even the fact of the existence of these writings.

A.I. Ovčarenko was to a great extent responsible for the harassment and early death of Aleksandr Tvardovskij, the editor of *Novyj Mir* and a prominent Russian poet. During the discussion of Tvardovskij's poem 'By the Right of Memory', which had found its way to the West via some inconceivable channels, Ovčarenko called this poem "*Kulak*-minded" in front of Tvardovskij himself and on the next day the same Ovčarenko was appointed a member of the *Novyj Mir* editorial board, still headed by Tvardovskij.[29] Tvardovskij was unable to endure this insult and submitted his resignation.

In 1966, A. Ovcarenko was nominated, along with another infamous scholar, Roman M. Samarin, to run for election to associate member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences.[30] All members of the IMLI were horror-stricken by the thought that once Ovčarenko was elected to the Academy of Sciences, he will be automatically appointed to be the Director of the IMLI, with R.M. Samarin and the above-mentioned S.M. Petrov as his deputies. Various scholars felt it was their duty to write a petition to the Academy of Sciences in order to prevent this most unfortunate election. When the petition was written, many scholars became frightened to death and tried under any pretext to avoid signing the letter. They were aware of Ovčarenko's powerful connections to the top levels, knowing the fact that he was a member of

the Supreme Evaluation Committee (VAC) which approved or rejected submitted doctorate theses, and they were generally convinced that persons like Ovčarenko would inevitably climb to the top of the official staircase. Nevertheless, the case of Ovčarenko was so obvious that at least twelve scholars signed the letter. The first name among the signatures was that of Leonid I. Timofeev, a distinguished scholar who said with a heavy sigh while signing the letter, "Well, let us lay our head under the axe!" Despite the shrewd manoeuvres of Ovčarenko's influential friends in the Academy of Sciences, the letter was read at a meeting of the academicians, and academician V.M. Zirmunskij, who had been arrested several times in the 1930's, announced loudly that he would not vote for Ovčarenko. The nominations of Ovčarenko, and Samarin as well, were defeated, and on the next day the scholars of the IMLI embraced and kissed the authors of the letter. But those who had signed it knew that they had gained a ruthless enemy. While drunk, Ovčarenko assured his booze companions and bosom friends that he will "be avenging them for even twenty years, and not be comforted until all of those scribes and their friends are fired from the Institute!" He meant what he said. In the 1970's, out of the original twelve persons who signed the letter, only four survived: one of them was an academician's wife and another was the nephew of the President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. Mr. A.I. Ovčarenko keeps on thriving. He was said to have sent M. Suslov a denunciation of B.Sučkov, the former director of the IMLI. B. Sučkov made an attempt to see Suslov, but was not received and died soon after of a heart attack. Several years ago Ovčarenko was a visiting Professor in one of the Ivy League Universities in North America.

In her recent book, *The Process of Expulsion*, Lidija Čukovskaja, a well-known Russian authoress, describes a number of infernal figures who led the Soviet authors on the road to Communism. Vladimir Maksimov, Arnost Kol'man, Vladimir Voinovič, Olga Ivinskaja, Grigorij Svirskij, Igor Melčuk, Vladimir Kormer, Ernst Neizvestnij, Nadežda Mandel'štam, the above-mentioned Lidija Čukovskaja, Aleksander Solzhenitsyn[31], and many other Soviet authors perpetually engraved in the annals of Soviet history, also describe these Party members, who have been building their empires through their Party membership. Having ruined the reputation and the future of their honest colleagues and adversaries, they could indeed exclaim: "What is good for us is good for the Communist Party and the Soviet Union." Among these men are: the authors Sergej Narovčatov, Sergej Michalkov, Nikolaj Gribačev, and Aleksej Surkov; the philosophers Konstantinov, Minz and Fedoseev; the biologist Dubinin; the linguists Filin and Panfilov; the orientalists N. Fedorenko and G.F. Kim. These are only a few of those who will not hesitate to walk on the corpses of their

colleagues and friends in order to achieve success and comfort in this life. They create their own influential and powerful mafias and a word of criticism uttered against them literally means to lay one's head upon the scaffold and under the axe. For the time being, these people are almost undefeatable and invincible. In Konstantin Paustovskij's words, "they will never hesitate and are never mistaken, for their hearts are empty."[32] Only few of them, like Aleksandr Fadeev, might properly evaluate their own past actions and take their life. As a rule, these people are almost eternal.

The same P.N. Fedoseev we mentioned above writes in *Voprosy filosofii* about Gorbachev's *perestrojka*:

> The situation reaches such a point, as it has been pointed out by M.S. Gorbachev, ... that "even the concepts 'acceleration' and '*perestrojka*' are sometimes inserted into the framework of deadening dogma and stereotypes, throwing out their novelty and revolutionary essence.[33]

In other words, Fedoseev - in launching the campaign of *glasnost'* and *perestrojka* - joins forces with such notorious free-thinkers as A Čakovskij and A. Ovčarenko.

These people have created a new class, a new layer of potential rulers. They do not know what love is. They are inspired and led by hatred. They are not able to love those who are akin to them and if they happen to love their wives and children, it is because they are a part of them and they need them. Great tragedies happen in these families when their children reject them and their values. They hate each other as well, but they understand that they need each other, for otherwise they will be easily overthrown by those whom they rule and suppress. When they fire or execute those who disagree with them, they demonstrate, in A. Galich's words, "that they are devoted to each other".

These are people with deeply hurt and thwarted consciences. They are not necessarily fools but, of course, there is no Socrates or Plato among them. Their center of existence gravitates around power, money and pleasure, and the further they proceed on their road, the less creative they become. They are aware of what is going on in the country and outside of it, but they do not have any other choice. By serving their Party, they serve their base and bestial interests. At some stage, their ability to think, evaluate, and create fades out and they become woodened, stoned, deadened. As a rule, their faces are very inexpressive and dead-pan. They are cynical about everything, including their own Party and the people whom they are supposed to worship. All kinds of dirty jokes about the Party and people originate in their midst.

Their life is hard. They need peace and solitude to weigh their circumstances and rush into new battles to strengthen their power and punish their adversaries. They are never interested in whether their foes and opponents are right or wrong. They simply want to grind them into powder and dust. They need pleasures, tasty food, all sorts of sexual joys and comforts of leisure. They think they deserve them because of their difficult life. They think they are essentially good people and they do not consider themselves to be cowards. But along with that, they find themselves in a world beyond good and evil. Murder and vice are a part of their life. There are no lies and slanders, there are only means to achieve their goals to strengthen their power and to promote their ascent upwards.

They like to go abroad. Their world consists of luxurious hotels, delicious food, polite listeners and co-operative businessmen. People abroad are better dressed and not so gloomy. Women are much more attractive and available. Grigorij Kotovskij, the son of the Civil War hero, and the son-in-law of Andrej Gromyko's brother, a relatively impressive participant in various Soviet delegations, complains in his intimate conversations that life in the Soviet Union is like hell and he goes abroad as if to paradise. But they do not have great illusions about the West either. They are almost convinced that the time will come when the West will fall as their prey and trophy.

Having come from ordinary people, they hate and despise them. In their eyes, these common people are just beasts of burden and do not, at this time, deserve a better destiny. Those who are strong deserve a good life and power but the weaker ones should be ruled and trodden upon. From this point of view, Hitler is their natural leader as are Stalin and Andropov although, Khrushchev and Brezhnev are weaklings. But, ultimately, they all suffer from the complex of inferiority. In their childhood or teenage years they have never been real ringleaders. They become such later on because of the Party spirit and its ideology. Apart from the Party and its power, each of them is awkward, ugly, not very skillful and almost never really attractive. Actually, they are cowards when it comes to facing strength and an iron fist. But all of these things are forgotten when they have power and money in their hands. However, they never cheat themselves and forget that all of these privileges and joys have been bestowed upon them by the Party alone. Without it, they would have remained nothing.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Rank and File of the Party

We should now consider the main rank and file of the Party. If the members of the above-mentioned leadership groups are counted by dozens, and the members of the next group, who have risen from the ranks, are counted by the hundreds, the members of the rank and file stratum are numbered by the millions. These almost twenty million men and women create a huge army cemented by the same principles, discipline, taboos and vows. They include old ones who are in their sixties and seventies, as well as quite young ones who are in their early twenties. They may be highly intelligent and scholarly or almost illiterate and uneducated. They may be pretty young women who are exceedingly attractive to the extent that the KGB uses them as "swallows" to blackmail foreigners and suspicious persons. They can include old and ugly harridans. The same Party will include professional spies, terrorists, soft-mannered diplomats and high-handed marshals and generals and, at the same time, it will include naive-minded milkmaids and stablemen from remote collective farms, relatively peaceful fishermen and foresters, carpenters and janitors.

The same Party unites under its banners incredibly wealthy people who have several apartments in the city and palazzo-like residences in the suburbs and on the Black Sea or Baltic Sea, and those who have practically nothing. In the same Party there are thousands of those who believe that every word pronounced by their leaders and published by the official press is the word of wisdom, and there are hundreds of thousands of those who have a long time ago concluded that everything they hear from the mouth of the Party leaders is hardly anything but lies and nonsense. There are still some who believe that Communism, a new classless society based on the equality and prosperity of all, is still being built, although they admit that one cannot avoid miscalculations and errors in such a huge, unprecedented construction. At the same time, there are many people who do not have the slightest idea as to whether Soviet society is planning to build anything besides what already exists in this huge country.[1] And beyond any doubt, there are many hundreds of thousands of persons who will grin and laugh at the suggestion that the heroic Soviet people with their rampant drunkenness and sloth are going to build anything more decent than another brothel, or madhouse, or a huge prison and barbed-wired concentration camp separated by an incredibly lengthy Berlin wall from the rest of the world, which in its foolishness and ignorance is prepared to widen the Communist space from its own territory and at its own expense.

For that reason, any observations and generalizations concerning this rank and file stratum will definitely need additional elaboration. Nevertheless, we are able to characterize the bulk of this lower stratum of the Party-contingent by the following parameters: What can they do and what can they expect from the Party and from the country? What are their relationships with the ordinary people outside the Party ranks and towards the ruling elite at the top of the Party echelons? Under the pressure of what taboos are they forced to continue their dutiful existence and what impact does their Party membership exert upon their character and mentality?

A member of the Communist Party can do a great deal. He can work as a Stakhanovite, overfulfilling his norm by two or three times, and encourage others by his own example to abstain from vodka, smoking and swearing. He may speak with lazy people, admonish mischievous and hooligan-like individuals. He can criticize his own Party boss in public, and the director of his factory. He may send a letter or an article to the higher Party officials or to the open and free Soviet press. If he is a diligent Party member and a qualified worker or a specialist, he can be elected as a deputy to the regional or city councils of workers. He can be elected even higher. He might suggest to his city, town or village administration that they should make shifts in traffic schedules, change the hours for selling food and wine. He can complain that the food shops do not have enough butter and milk and try to help those ordinary people who do not have enough money to buy sweaters and shoes for their children, wives and themselves.

A member of the Party may inform the authorities that the chairman of their collective farm is an embezzler and thief, or that the director of the shop steals mercilessly and buys a new car for himself with the stolen money. He may suggest that the regional public library should have the books of Lev Trotsky, Joseph Stalin and Alexander Solzhenitsyn, which were published in the Soviet Union in the early 1920's, late 1940's or early 1960's. Another member of the Party may complain that the mail box is located too far away from the house where hundreds of people want to mail their letters to their relatives and that the chief of the House Committee should plant some trees in their backyard and paint anew the worn-out fence.

These and incomparably more "rights" are promised to any Party member by the Party's Constitution, but unless he is an uncommonly obstinate man or just mentally sick, he will understand shortly that something is definitely wrong either with all these rights, guaranteed by the Party Constitution, or with the country or with himself. He can overfulfill his norm by two or three times which is not difficult since workers and peasants, as a rule, produce only one-third of what they are able to do. The problem is, anyhow, that if the Party member

increases his productivity by two or three hundred percent, the demand will come that other workers produce the same amount of parts. In general, according to the unwritten rule of the "frozen ceiling of wages" in Soviet economics, after a few weeks of increased productivity, sweat and labor, the worker will receive the same amount of money as he did prior to any innovations and heroic deeds. The Party member, who had initiated this innovation, will feel himself a fool, and what is even worse, he will be hated, despised and cold-shouldered by his associates for breaking the rules of their implicit opposition to the unfair demands for work which is never rewarded by proper pay. He will abstain from vodka, quit smoking and never utter dirty words, but for this the other workers will consider him weird and he will find himself isolated. Ordinary Russians mix polite words with swears from the cursing language called *mat* in a fifty-fifty ratio and they consider non-drinkers to be either sick or religious. Religious persons are persecuted and discriminated against much more sadistically than drunkards or victims of any addiction. A Party member may admonish lazy people and cutthroats only to be scolded or beaten by them, for these people think it is none of his damned business to give them lessons on how they should live. He may send a letter to the higher Party officials or to the media and will find himself in such difficulties and subsequent persecutions that he will necessarily repent his boldness. For the discoveries of corruption, he risks being jailed himself. If he is not mad, he will never raise the question about the books of Trotsky and Solzhenitsyn. Even his requests to plant a few trees in the garden and to paint the fence may be opposed by those who would like to live in peace; but at least this last "right" is an area where he might safely gain the reputation of a complainer without risking imprisonment and expulsion from his job.

But these rank and file Party members may undoubtedly secure some privileges for themselves. They may be elected as the secretaries of their Party bureau and thus increase their salaries or they may obtain a new apartment, a free pass to a Black Sea sanatorium, or be sent abroad for two weeks or a couple of years. Of course, they must pay for all this by overlooking the negative sides of their superiors and influential colleagues or directly through bribes. A scholar who had been sent to America for several months admitted that she had to give food presents to various persons, that is "to put something on their paw", since otherwise she would never be sent to America again. For pretty women to go to bed with their superiors is almost a license for receiving additional privileges. Various well-informed people explain the favors received by Ekaterina Furtseva, which includes her promotion to the Politburo and then to the Ministry of Culture, by her intimate friendship with Nikita Khrushchev. But if the persons in

question otherwise thoroughly pursue the ever-wavering Party line, such deviations from strict Party behavior are easily ignored by people at the helm. These people do not expect any great changes in the life of their society, and do not believe that the people on the top are interested in bringing them about. At the same time, they themselves do not want any changes and especially radical shifts, for they are well aware of the moods prevailing among people.

In the late 1960's, Aleksandr P. Vorona was arrested and sent to the Kazan Mental hospital for a letter to Leonid Brezhnev in which he wrote: "You do not want to understand words, that's why one should deal with you by physical methods."[2] Party members may easily imagine what might happen to them if the people's riot, "bloody and ruthless", in Pushkin's words, bursts out one day in Russia. In various cases, the Party ideology emphasizes its vitally tight bonds with the people, but Lidija Čukovskaja hit the point, when she angrily appealed to those who manipulate the people's wrath and direct it against the persons of integrity and courage:

> Watch out lest the real wrath burst out from under the earth and like lava drown not only your miserable wall, the wall you erect between the best minds and 'ordinary people' but then, enlightened by nothing and purified by nobody's animating or pacifying thought, for instance by the thought of Academician Sakharov, also drown in a blood-bath the guilty and the innocent alike, without any distinction.[3]

Eventually, the relationships with "ordinary people" entirely characterize the rank and file layer of the Party. These millions of Party members function in the long run as the driving belt which binds the common populace to the giant and soulless chariot of Marxist-Leninist machinery. They have to be the Party's eyes and ears. They must signal the appropriate institutions about the changing and dangerous moods amidst the people without delay. They have to read lectures to these people and spread Party propaganda they must unceasingly promote and continue the political seminars in which the recent speeches of Party leaders and the "brilliant" books written by Leonid Brezhnev or his successors are scrupulously discussed by two hundred million Soviet people. Through these seminars and lectures, which have become a laughing stock for many decades, the Party wants to stupify and indoctrinate the people while at the same time they wish to discover and isolate troublemakers.

They cannot help fearing these ambiguous and enigmatic "common people", the majority of whom constantly dwell in terrifying poverty and unimaginable drunkenness and ignorance. But these millions of

Party members have been until recently unable to change anything in the people's life. Moreover, they perpetuate the regrettable existence of these "plebeians". Since Stalin's death, the common people's life has considerably improved, and nevertheless all these new apartments, increased salaries, and the abundance of vodka are not able to solve the most essential and deep-rooted problems. They see the real character of the common people who keep quiet and obedient for weeks and months and then, quite often, suddenly and absolutely unpredictably, burst into a fit of madness and violence. For about three centuries, the Russian populace endured the power of their Tsars and landlords; but in 1917 they lost patience and it continued for a number of years until Stalin put them into a strait-jacket. But who has any guarantees that such an outburst of violence will not repeat itself again? In that case they, the Party members, will be the first inevitable victims.

Perhaps it is only at this point that the vital interests of the Party rank and file and its top oligarchs meet inseparably. The ordinary Party members see only too clearly how their bosses have acquired for themselves and their families comforts and pleasures inherent to princely palaces. Subconsciously and unmistakably they are aware that while the horrid Party machine has recruited them and given them some advantages and gains, it has also deprived them of their freedom and the right to develop their own abilities in various fields and directions. Moreover, they feel themselves to be the courtesans and the raped victims of this grand and camouflaged spiritual and intellectual harem. Many of them strive not to think about these matters seriouly. *C'est la vie*! They walk, work and worry until they retire and die. But others are unable to resist the pressure of their own observations, conclusions and the data of their own feelings and emotions. They find themselves to be very unhappy creatures who can change very little in their lives. Their existence is determined by their professional ambitions, by the demands of their wives and families, and by their sustained habits and friendly relationships. One would shiver even at the thought of making the first step towards changing one's life. Besides, there are and have been millions of others in the same situation in the Party and one should only recall the tragedies and family dramas which befell those who had been expelled from the Party for their wrong thoughts and disapproved behavior. Those who live on the Party Olympus are much better judges of what should be done and the ones lower down have nothing else to do but continue their life and contribute what they can to the final stage of Communism-building. And so they continue to build something that will never be finished or even properly constructed.

But a Party member lives amidst so many limitations imposed on his actions, words or thoughts, that his character is seriously influenced and determined by these limitations or taboos. There is a great world

around him or her which one either ignores or becomes aware of through mere hearsay. He is not allowed to meet foreigners without special permission from his Party superiors. As a trustworthy Party member, he should inform his superiors about each meeting of this kind, but sensible and intelligent people would rather not meet foreigners at all, for various reasons including considerations of fear and justified precaution, than mention this question to their Party bosses and thereby risk being recruited as a KGB plant, if they have been so lucky as to escape this fate before that. A number of Party members would prefer to stay away from all people with dubious pasts or all those individuals in whom the omniscient state security might be interested. These include persons of noble origin, people even indirectly connected with the Tsar's court and previous regime, all those who have been repressed throughout the preceding decades for their Party activities against Stalin, all their relatives who have experienced a horrible life, all those who have been persecuted and suppressed under Stalin and after his death, those who have been either so bold or light-minded or so careless as to express their opinions in public and, of course, those whose names have been mentioned by the foreign, and therefore anti-Soviet media. A great number of these persons will never become their acquaintances, let alone friends. Having known from their experience what such relationships have entailed for many of their own friends in the past, they themselves stay away from them and bring forth their children in an appropriate atmosphere with giving them a great deal of wise advice. But they will not meet these people not only because they themselves do not wish to see them, but also because many such people will themselves never approach them on account of their well-known Party membership. People of integrity and intelligence will stay away from Party members for various reasons, including elementary caution and justified disappointment about their intellectual or human merits.

There are many Party members who demanded the death sentence for their own fathers when they were arrested by the KGB, or entirely forgot their close relatives who had been imprisoned by the state security.[4] If these Party members ignored their own fathers and husbands, brothers and sisters, why expect them to care for persons who do not play any role in their life at all? For these Party members, it would be unthinkable to exchange letters with those who are imprisoned or live abroad. At their Party meetings, they will mention the names of Soviet enemies, like the academician Sakharov or the exiled dissident Vladimir Bukovsky, and there is no question at all that they will vote to condemn their anti-Soviet activities as well as the role of many other dissidents and, perhaps, a few of them would even rebuke themselves for taking part in these meetings, which gradually

become a part of their life and a substitute for their thwarted spiritual existence.

Undoubtedly, it would be erroneous to expect these Party members to have any serious intentions to describe their life in a way satisfactory for many knowledgeable persons. This quite often presupposes the existence of relevant human conversations in which these people do not participate. At their family get-togethers, they try to avoid sharp and hazardous subjects mainly by talking about the everyday routine and trivial happenings. If anyhow, the younger or politically unstable relatives raise these fear-inspiring issues and they cannot avoid the discussion, they direct it along the approved lines. Their meetings with friends, if these exist at all, are also highly selective. Friends could also raise those undesirable questions, and in doing so, their friends impose upon them exactly what they want to avoid. Whatever is said at family gatherings will not be necessarily divulged beyond its frames[5], but how you can be sure about your friends? And if these friends are arrested tomorrow and interrogated, will they disclose whatever had been touched in their conversation or will they invent various frightening fables? As Anton Chekhov's hero, Belikov, said: "Ah, something might, alas, happen because of it!"[6] It is better not to discuss these matters at all and let one's conscience be quite clear before the Party so that one could at least sleep quietly. And if sometimes something does occur and, crossing one's fingers, some unpleasant fatal turn of events takes place, he does not know anything, he did not participate, did not discuss, did not hear, did not say anything. This is, of course, an extreme case, but it is one which occurs rather frequently.

There is another great segment of Party members who are willing to participate in discussions in which some hints and semi-critical statements are made. Under these circumstances, if the person is not a stool-pigeon or a professional informer, he enters the unknown field of new facts and fatalism. He is pleased that these conversations take place in his presence and that he is trusted by the obvious freethinkers. If these conversations are relatively frequent, he will rapidly shift over to a new ideological platform, compared with which everything he hears at Party meetings or reads in the Party press is simply balderdash. Such a person might even begin to listen to the foreign radio. Initially he will be frightened to death while listening to these non-approved, anti-Soviet or apolitical statements. He might give all this up and return to his shell but he may also continue to listen to the forbidden literature and his life will become even more complicated due to his double-mindedness. These cases will be touched by us later on.

Whether they like it or despise it, they are still obliged regularly to attend their Party meetings and listen to the speeches of their career-making or truth-seeking colleagues. They have to vote for

decisions which bring them to the verge of losing their mind. As Party members, they are obliged to function in some role as lecturers, organizers of political seminars in their own institutions or at some factory. They will be sent to a collective farm to pick potatoes and cut hay, because collective farmers do not want to work or are unable to fill all the necessary tasks within the framework of their collectivized, enslaved economic context. Everywhere around themselves, Party members see the traces of corruption and embezzlement, hack-work and injustice, but until recently they knew that to discuss all this in public meant incurring worries for himself and his family. There is no shortage of examples confirming this unwritten rule.

Nevertheless, from time to time the Party members are obliged to speak at their Party or non-Party gatherings in their institution, be it a plant, factory or a collective farm, whether they want it or not. Their superiors rely upon their Party-minded spirit and their committed loyalty. They know that their statements in public lack sincerity and contain a good deal of fraudulent remarks and appeals, but they must deliver them, for otherwise they might be accused of remaining passive. Party members should serve as good examples to non-Party people; they should lead them forward to the victory of Communist society; and, while on the road, they should improve the morale of people around them and raise their socialist consciousness. By the example of their words, actions and life they have to erase the moles and spots of the capitalist and private-property-based mentality which tends to survive for many years, even in the new socialist society. Many of these Party members criticize their own colleagues and raise their hands to expell them from the Party's ranks or to take them to task and insert a reprimand in their Party file. They chastise others for drinking, committing adultery, for their unwillingness to live with their wife or husband and for all kinds of disclosed misbehavior. By doing so or not doing so, they earn the reputation of being decent Party members or disreputable people and they also acquire a number of personal enemies with whom they must live side by side for years to come. They do not forgive their Party colleagues for some minor deviations from the Party line to which they would like them to adhere, and they know from their own experience that not an iota in their behavior will be overlooked by their Party bosses who expect full obedience and loyalty, or by their cynical colleagues, who do not give a damn for the Party decisions and forget about them the moment they vote for this decision.

But they are especially afraid of the specific public opinion which exists in their Party organization and which is not too easy to perceive or to formulate. Everywhere human beings seek to remain relatively honest and respected. The Party organization votes on many decisions which range from questions concerned with the country's foreign

policy to the major issues of the Soviet government line. The Party meeting which convenes every month or even more frequently should decide many problems which are often very painful for the community. In addition, in each Party organization there are "hawks" and "doves". Hawks use each chance to attack decent, honest and intelligent people whose behavior is always under unceasing observation and scrutiny. Even Party members stay away from these dangerous people who organize their own teams and mafias. But in each Party organization, as it has been described by Alexander Yashin in his famous short story, *The Levers*[7], there are human beings who care about the truth and about real life. Squeezed and thwarted by their Party machine, they still exert great effort to remain human beings endowed with intelligence and conscience. It is difficult, painful and sometimes quite impossible, but many of them still try and those who forget about conscience and decent behavior are time and again reminded of these phenomena by mysterious expressions in their own and others' eyes and glances.

Only God knows what is going on in the minds of these people. In their own thoughts, independently of their relationships with people and conversations, they also have a good number of taboos. They cannot allow themselves to visit the churches which survive in rare cases, because they might be seen there by somebody and therefore find themselves in a dangerous position. When they joined the Communsit Party, they promised to fight against religious addictions and the opium of the masses, but they cannot forget religion entirely and have some nostalgia for the ideals and the beauty which they have failed to obtain by joining the Party. The incredible paradox of their life is that in some cases they have joined the Party with the impulse of finding the truth and a way of life. Perhaps there were other much more mundane considerations and intentions, but at that time, these people could not believe that the whole Party consisted of so many cheaters and crooks. They do not now think that they themselves belong to the regiments of these unhappy swindlers and enslaved adventurers who have given up their obligation to develop the best talents in themselves. These people always feel a tremendous, unbearable burden on their own shoulders and great stress in their mind and soul. They cannot help feeling that something has gone quite wrong in their life and that their own soul has been deprived of a chance to drink pure water from clear unmuddied springs and sources. The images of their grandfathers, *babushkas* and mothers stand before their eyes. Those dear creatures were happier and they believed in God and had no idea about the Party. In solitary moments, when they seek peace and try to forget about all the unpleasant aspects of their life, this Party, with its numerous dark-faced and dead-eyed members, looms in front of them like a huge many-legged spider that weaves its web and whose disgusting and almost

invisible threads reach their minds and bind their hearts. The thoughts about the Party are actually a nightmare for them. It is better to get rid of these thoughts and to think about something else which is not so serious - about close relatives or children, for example. Life around them is not good, but who knows, it might become better in a few years. Good people still exist in the world, and such a life cannot last forever. Changes have to come although he himself does not make his personal contribution to bring these improvements any sooner.

These bitter thoughts might lead the Party member to take two different roads. The first is to abstain from any social activities, from any noisy participation in Party meetings and remain as far as possible from any commitments and assignments demanded by Party life. Such a life is not possible for everybody, for even when a person is refined, he or she will still remain a part of some Party organization. But with some effort, pretexts and a few lies one may assure his or her colleagues that he or she needs peace and solitude. However, it is still necessary to pay Party fees on a monthly basis, for otherwise the person might be expelled from the Party. One feels embarrassed to show up regularly at the Party meetings and exchange some phrases which indicate the fading of one's Party spirit and enthusiasm. It is more convenient not to arrange these obvious demonstrations, but to show up instead without any great fuss at the regular Party meetings, and listen quietly and silently to the streams of the Party's ideological nonsense.

Such a person joins the layer of the Party which might be called its ballast. These people have understood the nature of the Party and its *mafioso* structure, but they will not revolt against this. Some of them might return to the faith of their forefathers and, if they do not go to Church themselves, they talk about God with their religious friends and eat consecrated food and *phosphoras* distributed in the Church and brought to them by their intimate friend. In my life, I met several persons who, while remaining in the Party, re-entered the Church or established close ties with it. The scenes connected with this return or conversion are deeply moving.

When a person loses his close relationships with the Party or when these ties are loosened, he or she needs a solid substitute for the resulting vacuum and, as a rule, religious or idealistic philosophy may seriously help him. These persons might develop an interest in reading existentialist philosophers, Hinduist and Confucianist texts or the books of Teilhard de Chardin which were published in the Soviet Union. They will be interested in everything not directly connected with the Party ideology and its spirit whose odor alone makes them dizzy and sick. They are still tied to that shameful chariot and are obliged to demonstrate their loyalty to it on a superficial and showy level and this

drains a great deal of their nervous energy, but they look at themselves as partially reborn beings who have acquired a tremendous life experience. They may now think, recollect and even sometimes write. Nina Janevič wrote splendid memoirs about the IMLI, to which we referred above. Svetlana Allilueva, whom her father, Joseph Stalin, urged to join the Party, wrote an incredibly precious *Twenty Letters to a Friend* and her alienation from the Party with the succeeding defection to the West created a world-wide sensation which was followed by serious shifts at the higher levels of the KGB system. These sensational events were preceded by years of absence and disappearance. Though the case of Stalin's daughter is extraordinary in itself, it is also rather noteworthy. At some stage she had brought to her Institute of World Literature a note certified by her physician regarding her exhausted nervous system. She remained a member of the Institute's Party organization but kept on disappearing for months, forgetting to pay her Party membership fees. One of the Institute's Party bosses, V.I. Ščerbina raised a scandalous scene at a Party bureau meeting: "Where is Svetlana? We should find her! We are responsible for her. In the Central Committee of the Party they are concerned about her. She seems to have married once again and we know nothing about her!"[8] Mr. Ščerbina, one of the most unpleasant figures in the Party and in the pseudo-scholarly life of Moscow, was quite right: the Party members had overlooked her baptism in the Russian Orthodox Church and her manner of life which was very strange from the official point of view since she married a foreigner, wrote her first book and was now pondering leaving the country built by her father for a more quiet and free sojourn in the West that will be interrupted by her mysterious trip to Russia in 1984.

However, Party life would have been entirely hopeless and joyless if there did not exist a rather peculiar and interesting category of people which should be designated as troublemakers or the Party's vocal and disquieting constituency. Perhaps it was this group of people that created the Party as it is imagined in theory and in the minds of the idealists who defy the established traditions of the Party itself and the public opinion regarding it. In general, these people are honest, although their intellectual judgements about reality may be disputed. They are strong in their character and optimistic in their vision. They have been influenced very much by the ideology and psychology of the Party they had joined, but in general their existence in the Party is not very tranquil.

Their Party life is a constant struggle for justice within it. Undoubtedly, they should yield and compromise at some stages of their Party career and may remain silent in the Party until some period when they decide that it is time to speak out. They may speak out throughout

their Party career either on a more or less middle-of-the road level or in a way which would put their whole career at stake. If they speak out moderately, abstaining from overwhelming criticism of the Party line and the social system, they will have unpleasant clashes with their superiors and may be fired from their job or forced to leave one position for another. Nevertheless, they will remain in the Party and at some stage they will arrive at the conclusion that the criticism and self-criticism demanded by the Party constitution is nothing more than an appeal to make one's Party life even more painful and agonizing than one could have planned or foreseen. Such a person might make one or several speeches at Party meetings and he will be greeted in his personal conversations by some of his colleagues, but he will necessarily see their hypocrisy and their unwillingness to support him in public. For each member who would like to criticize his Party bosses or their institution's superiors is aware that he risks the stability of his job and may be fired or pressed to leave under the circumstances and the difficulties which the ingenious Party superiors, relying on the complexities of the indigenous life and economics, will create around those Party members who are motivated by their straightforward and ingenuous considerations and aspirations. After a while, these pure-hearted people will be obliged to keep quiet and adhere to some general rules of Party behavior.

Those who have made up their minds to speak in the Party against its main attitudes and try to revise the decisions adopted on the higher level, especially by the Party's plenary meetings on various levels, not to mention the decisions of its Conferences and Congresses, as a rule, risk much more than even they imagine. In Lenin's time, Communists could criticize the Party's line and survive without any grave complication. Under Stalin's rule, the situation became much more serious since the top Party members who criticized the top leadership paid for this with their life, freedom or jobs. Since that time, the criticism of superiors or their attitudes has been interpreted as the result of a suicidal complex. After Stalin's death and the famous 20th Congress, which posthumously took Stalin to task for being a sadist and executioner, the Central Committee prescribed the holding of meetings throughout the Soviet Union in order to discuss N. Khrushchev's speech about Stalin. Consequently, many Party members expressed their concern about Stalin's bloody despotism and insisted on the need to convene an extraordinary Congress of the Communist Party which would discuss the emergency and find ways to get out of the dead-end. For a number of years, I knew more or less closely one Party member, Petr Šastitko, who added his voice to these demands in 1956. The repercussions of these demands came immediately, months before the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. He was

expelled from the Party and almost dismissed from the academic institution. Later, after receiving a strong reprimand, he was restored to the Party and for a number of years behaved himself quietly and silently, observing, however, sympathetic and kind glances from his various colleagues and friends.

In 1961, Major-General Petr G. Grigorenko made his statement at the regional Party conference in Moscow. In his speech he criticized Nikita Khrushchev for having established his cult of personality despite Khrushchev's and the Party's criticism of Stalin's cult.[9] He was applauded by the participants of the Conference, many of whom did not seem to comprehend that it was made on Petr G. Grigorenko's personal initiative. The Major-General was dismissed from his position as the Department Chairman at the Military Academy, transferred to the Far East, demoted to the rank of a private soldier and then confined to a mental hospital where he remained for some time, even after Khrushchev's ouster. While in the position of the Major-General, his salary reached 800 rubles, which was equal to six times the salary of a skilled worker, and he was looked upon as a madman by those who considered the money he had lost for his outspokenness.

This happened years before the events of the late 1960's, in which Petr Grigorenko played such a prominent role. At one of our subsequent meetings, Grigorenko told me that for his speech at the Party Regional Conference in 1961, he expected nothing less than execution. Subsequently, he was expelled from the Party. In 1968, while we were signing the petition of the twelve in P. Jakir's apartment, I had a talk with him about his Party convictions. His views at that time were entirely Marxist-Leninist. When I visited him in his New York apartment in 1979 and raised the question of his Marxist-Leninist views at that time, he said that it had been more tactics than anything else. With his brilliant record of public activities, outspokenness and after years of unprecedented turmoil in the mental hospital of Černachovsk, Petr Grigorevič Grigorenko, a great son of the Russian nation, returned to his Christian roots. His wife, Zinaida Michajlovna, who had been a Party member for many years, returned to Christian faith as well.[10]

By the end of 1953, the year of Stalin's death, Vladimir Pomerancev published his rebellious article, 'About Sincerity in Literature', and paid the highest price for his courage.[11] In the mid-1950's, the physicist Jurij Orlov criticized the Party policy concerning the "cult of personality".[12] The Russian authors Grigorij Svirskij and Lev Kopelev were among those Party members whose anti-Stalinist speeches added fuel to the fire of the excited intelligentsia throughout the 1960's. Boris Shragin, Boris Balter, Jurij Ščedrovickij and many others participated in the protest petition campaign of the 1960's. Alexander Zinovyev remained uninvolved in the 1960's, but in the mid-1970's he published

abroad his *Yawning Heights* and was immediately expelled from the Party and fired from his job.[13]

Many Party members considered it to be their civic duty to speak out against injustice. Many more kept silent and later voted to punish their own friends for the actions they were ready to commit, but at the last moment they hesitated and demurred. Those who participated in that protest movement could foresee the unavoidable repressions but, nevertheless, they brought themselves into the center of danger and fire. Their courage should not be erased from the memory of our contemporaries and ancestors. These actions cost them more in nerves and blood than would have been the case for their non-Party friends. But they were unable to keep silent. I would be wrong to blame them for miscalculating the course of events and being overly optimistic. Nor would we be morally correct to make the judgement that these courageous and noble-minded people confused their own Party with some other one, which does not exist under Soviet conditions. They felt themselves to be a part of their own people and the intelligentsia. Their many years of Party membership have by no means curbed their enthusiasm to serve the lofty ideals of Russian society and of our universe. They did it despite the frequent admonitions and warnings of their Party colleagues that their actions would inevitably be suicidal. They were not prevented by their husbands or wives from doing this. Moreover, in several cases, the entire family, where husband and wife belonged to the Party, participated in the protest campaign, as did the philosophers Pjama Gajdenko and Jurij Davydov[14], and dramatic consequences did not fail to occur. These events proved that Party membership did not succeed in extinguishing the spirit of freedom in many people. The percentage of Party members in the protest movement was unexpectedly high. Their contribution should not be forgotten, because almost in each case they were threatened with expulsion from the Party.

For a Party member who should be ready to sacrifice his life for the cause of the Party and for whom nothing in the world, including his own family, wife and children is more precious than the Party, the expulsion from its membership is a profound drama in his life. Whatever the Party orders should be heard by him and obeyed. Unlike God, the Party is much more visible and it might change its views and directives time and again. A dedicated member of the Communist Party should never doubt the Party decisions. While its future decisions are being debated, a member of the Party may and must participate in the discussions and express his views. Cemented by the rules of "democratic centralism", the Party "encourages" the criticism and self-criticism only until the moment when the Party decision is voted and adopted. Then the decision becomes the supreme law and to fight against the decision or to doubt it is equivalent to putting one's neck

into a noose. The Party decision has a higher authority in the eyes of its twenty million members than the Lord's words in a devoted Christian's eyes. A Christian may disobey the strict rules of God and his Church while being aware that he commits a sin, which he might still make up for and redeem by repentance and prayers.

With the Party, it is even much more complicated. The Party persecutes some actions with rigidity and strictness. The Party has its vigilant foes and for co-operation with them, the offender has to be punished with reasonable ruthlessness. One ought to repent sincerely and abundantly in order to expiate his sin. The Constitution of the Party is unambiguous: "The unbreakable law of the CPSU's life is its idea-based and organizational unity, the monolithic nature of its ranks, and the highly conscious discipline of its Communists. Each manifestation of factionalism and cliquishness is incompatible with Marxist-Leninist Party-mindedness, with being in the Party." The Party gets rid of persons who violate the Programme, the Constitution of the CPSU, and are compromised by their behavior.

CHAPTER FIVE

Expulsion from the Party

There exists a thick layer of people who would freeze to death at the sheer thought of joining the Party. There exists a huge structure of persons who would have been very unhappy and probably even lost in life if they would not have had a chance to enlist themselves in the Party. There are many who feel unhappy in the Party, but they will remain there for, outside its ranks, they would have been even more unhappy, at least for a few initial years. And, of course, there are those Party members whose expulsion from the Party is so amazing an event that one is unable to comprehend it, while on the other hand there is a certain group of people whose ultimate and inevitable expulsion from the Party might well be predicted and foreseen.

For a member who has been in the Party for many years, there exists no graver tragedy than to be expelled from it. He or she could receive an oral reprimand which will be recorded in his file or, as a very inauspicious sign, a severe reprimand with a warning to be fixed in his file. In the latter case, it is understood that his Party membership has been jeopardized and one careless action or word will lead to a final expulsion from the Party. In any case, whatever bad complications have been incurred by these reprimands, they do not yet create a tragedy. A person having these reprimands will not be promoted higher, his Party career will be handicapped for an indefinite time, he will not be allowed to go abroad, his publications might be put off until the next year or even later, he will not be provided with a state apartment which has been already mentioned previously, he will be criticized repeatedly at several Party meetings for his behavior, and the press might even mention his name in a rather unfavorable context, but his or her existence continues without involvment in any great disaster.

The expulsion from the Party is a real tragedy for almost everybody, for those who treasure their Party membership as if it were a real Church and for those who have for a long time approached their Party membership as a disgrace and a participation in some diabolical network. Ejection from the Party in the 1920's could be a relative trifle in a Soviet citizen's life. Since the mid-1930's it became what it still is now: a turning point in life, an abyss opened in front of the person who was comfortable and secure only several months prior to this. Expulsion from the Party might denote anything in the world, starting with the immediate dismissal from one's job and loss of all privileges up to immediate imprisonment and even the most severe sentence which

includes execution. Expulsion from the Party means that the Party revokes the safe-conduct which preserves any current Party member from official judiciary or administrative persecutions.

By no means does the expulsion signify that the person ejected from the Party remains on the same level with non-Party members. The expelled person will find himself in a much more dangerous situation. In all of the forms which he must fill in at all the various situations required by life, he must write that he had been expelled from the Party and this status may prove to be even worse than to be Jewish, to have relatives abroad or to have been imprisoned. Revolt Pimenov, the author of exceedingly important memoirs, recollects that in the 1950's he was asked to rewrite his autobiography, where he had originally written: "I was not on trial, under interrogation or in the Party."[1] The committee which had looked into his file found this phrase unacceptable, but the quoted words express the situation more or less accurately, bringing together in one sentence concepts of identical meaning. To have written the demanded form in his autobiography and say that he had been in the Party and then expelled, would confirm that the author of these lines was just "the enemy of the people", so that a person would need special protection and assistance to find any job with such a spot on his biography.

Before being put on trial a person is automatically expelled from the Party. The Soviet court never deals with Party members, but only with those who have been in the Party. The Party expels from its ranks those who have broken its rules and, like the medieval Church, delivers its former members to the jurisdiction of the secular authorities, empowered by the same Party. The Party deprives criminals of their membership in the same way as the noblemen in Russian history were deprived of their nobility while being sentenced to imprisonment.[2] From this angle, Party membership should be approached as a privileged status equal to nobility which gives its members a number of privileges. So far as court trial and imprisonment are concerned, the Soviet authorities deprive the guilty of their Party membership before the people are jailed and even prior to the interrogation and trial, while the status of nobility in Russia could be withdrawn by the court's decision only.

In the 1920's, the Soviet authorities executed former Party members when they seemed to betray their cause to the enemies. In the Winter of 1923-24, in Arkhangelsk, Andrej Novikov was executed. Having worked for the Cheka while being a Party member, he later became disappointed with the Party's politics and the Cheka activities, and his crime consisted in quitting the Party state security organs and sending a letter to the *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik*, published abroad.[3]

A great number of Party members who joined the opposition

against Stalin were exiled to Siberia, Central Asia and other distant areas. Leon Trotsky was expelled in 1927, before being first exiled to Central Asia and then deported to Turkey. Many others like N. Bukharin, G. Zinovyev and L. Kamenev were expelled from the Party and then, after their repentance, restored to Party membership only to be expelled in the 1930's once again, put on trial and executed or sentenced to many years of imprisonment. In the late 1930's expulsion from the Party meant an inevitable arrest, with frequent executions.[4] The purges of the 1930's, mysterious in themselves, might be interpreted first of all as a crusade of Stalin's regenerated Party against the old Bolsheviks and all those Party members who could be suspected of disagreeing with Stalin and his ever-changing policy. In 1937, the rumor was widespread that once during a dark night, the NKVD men knocked on the door of one family whose members, instead of opening the doors, shouted from the inside: "No Communists live in this apartment." The Trotskyites were imprisoned and hundreds of them were executed or even buried alive.[5] Roy Medvedev writes about the rivers of sacred blood which flowed at that period.[6] The significance of that incomprehensible holocaust might be grasped against this background that by means of the horrifying tortures, executions and persecutions of the family members, relatives and friends, Stalin's hatchetmen wanted to advise all the remaining Party members that they should get along with the Party line or with what was proclaimed by Stalin. The surviving Party members were adequately advised by these events as were those millions who would seek Party membership in the years to come.

The curious aspect of these expulsions lay in the evident fact that those expelled were still Communists in their hearts, while those who expelled them were not Communists any longer; for how else could one understand why one group of Party members exterminated the other group of older, more convinced and dedicated Communists by such brutal methods? From one point of view, the old Bolsheviks responsible for the crimes of 1917 and the succeeding years were subjected to incredible tortures, humiliation and execution for their devotion to the Party and its founder. These hardened Bolsheviks, who had undergone unprecedented persecutions and pressures both under the Tsar and especially after Lenin's death, were not willing to change their mind simply to please the Party's new leader. The old Party members perished and went to another world. From the other point of view, this holocaust announced the death of the revolutionary spirit and its replacement by something else. The revolutionary ideology which treated the cannibalism, the destruction of culture and the mass-scale crimes as inevitable, although regrettable by-products and spindrift of reality, was replaced by the forces born from the revolution's womb,

for the bloody violence together with the endless tyranny was life itself, camouflaged, however, by pseudo-Marxist robes and theories that had nothing in common with any reality whatsoever.

The group of high Party officials which included Vjaceslav Molotov was probably the last indication of the fact that those who were expelled remained Communists in their hearts. However, Vjačeslav Molotov belonged to the older group of Bolsheviks whose Party vision after Stalin's death underwent substantial changes. Future historians will show more adequately the mental transformations that took place in the case of people like Lazar Kaganovich, Georgy Malenkov and Dmitry Shepilov who were also expelled from the Party for their "anti-Party activities" in 1957 against Khrushchev and his group. As one can see from Molotov's struggle for the purity of the Marxist-Leninist line, he remained a Party-minded person. In the 1960's, I was told by Anatolij Katerinič, who worked with Molotov at the Soviet Embassy in Ulan-Bator, that although strictly dogmatic, Molotov's vision was undoubtedly based on Marxism-Leninism. In 1984 Molotov was reinstated to the Party by K. Chernenko.

Fedor Raskolnikov, the Soviet Ambassador to Bulgaria who refused to return to Moscow when recalled in April 1939, wrote an offensive letter to Stalin just before his own death which was triggered by Stalin and after Stalin's death was exonerated by the Party because he remained a Communist until his last moment. At the great trials of the 1930's, several dozen Soviet celebrities, previously expelled from the Party, dumbfounded the whole world by their disclosures and testimony. Nowadays, their behavior remains enigmatic even if we note that they had been tortured, beaten bloody and drugged so as to be deprived of their strength and will. It will be relevant and non-redundant to explain their behavior by their sincere motivation, supported by the machinery of interrogation, to serve the Party and its cause by their testimonies and their voluntary acceptance of death.

While reading and listening to the stories about the tortures and executions of the expelled Soviet Communists in the 1930s, it grieves one to remain quiet in the face of these incredible and unprecedented scenes, where some Party-carded interrogators tortured their own Party members and shot them. One is at pains to understand several aspects of these events and the psychology of the people involved. The interrogators were sadists, despicable torturers and most disgusting murderers who functioned in the infernal machinery headed by Stalin and his aides, but they could not help but believe that their own Party expected these actions from them. At the same time, they were absolutely aware that they tortured and executed innocent people devoted to the Party's principles. Being undoubtedly dirty villains, these murderers were expected to believe the Party and its leader, but

one is tempted to ask: How were they able to survive as human beings? When they were creating all those unimaginable interrogations and trials, did they know that they were setting the snares which would entrap them at the next turn of this diabolical wheel? But it is still much more important to perceive the psychology of the millions of Party members subjected to the tortures. Now when another "demon from the Caucasian mountains" comes to the Kremlin Olympus[7], and it was a great miracle that some of the events of the 1930s did not repeat themselves in this unfortunate country, it becomes increasingly clear that this devilish machinery of self-extermination is concealed within the Party and the country itself, where the Party came to power for the first time in history. Many principles of Marxism-Leninism, in many respects profound and perceptive, seem to me so baseless and subjective that one remains amazed and dumbfounded upon seeing how deeply they had penetrated and seized the consciences and minds of so many intellectual, spirited and honest sons and daughters of Russia. Beyond any doubt, many of those who had been brutally tortured and killed had themselves been murderers and torturers in the name of their great ideas. But in order to see once again what these great heroes were doing during the Civil War and later on, it would be sufficient to read some masterpieces created by I. Babel, M. Bulgakov, M. Zoščenko and A. Platonov. A great mystery is concealed in these heroes' deaths, for we are more often than not struck by their devotion to their Communist cause, by their enormous endurance of suffering and torture, by their unrivalled ability to survive the hell of prison camps in Siberia and the Russian North.

We are deeply, unbelievably moved and shattered upon reading Nikolai Bukharin's letter to the future leaders of the Party, which he wrote a few days prior to his arrest and which he asked his wife to memorize by heart in order to read it after the times of troubles would be over.[8] He knew that Stalin would try to exterminate all pertinent documents. What else can we say besides words of sympathy and compassion for Kossior, who had resisted all forms of co-operation with his interrogators until his own sixteen-year-old daughter was raped by the torturers in his presence[9] with the result that after he agreed to sign his "testimony", his daughter, released from the prison, threw herself under the wheels of a passing train? What can we say while reading in Roy Medvedev's book about an NKVD colonel, who forced a prisoner to drink a glass of the colonel's urine under pain of death in case of refusal? The blood freezes in our veins when we read *Trotskyists at Vorkuta*, an eyewitness report by M.B.[10] about the hunger strike in 1936-37 by about one thousand expelled Communists in a polar prison camp and their subsequent beastly, heart-rending executions! No doubt, for Communists such as Socrates Gevorkjan

and his friends, monuments will be raised in the future and their memory will remain sacred in many hearts including mine. They definitely redeemed themselves by their heroism in the last months of their lives and perhaps thereby expiated those crimes which seem to have been accomplished by them since they had been Communists in the high positions. Those who resist despotism and despise Stalin will be eternally grateful to them for their daring and fearless challenge to this bloodsucker. On the eve of that cursed year of 1937, they resisted with courage and self-sacrifice the tyranny and bloody thirst of Stalin and one can believe that the country, if only it could have known about them, would have been awakened in order to prevent those rivers of blood from being released and flowing.

The greatest puzzle of all is whether their enormous turmoil, sufferings and martyrdom demonstrate the invincibility of the Marxist and Trotskyite ideology which enabled them to die proudly rather than to give up and live with the lie of Stalinism. This question should not be confused with their camaraderie, their nobility of mind and their ability to take care of those who were old and sick.

History will undoubtedly judge the events connected with the Russian Revolution and the succeeding developments permeated with blood and nightmares. In our judgement, however, the Communists fell into the snares and pits they had themselves spread and dug for others within and outside their own groups. The executioners and the executed, the torturers and the tortured were berries from the same field; they belonged to the same breed. Quite often their lives differed from each other not because of differences of nature, but by their luck and the course of time which allotted each one a position in that line of suicides. No doubt, Trotsky, Bukharin, Kamenev, Zinovyev and many others differed from those illiterate and uneducated hatchetmen of Stalin who would come to power in the years to come but, nevertheless, one can still see in their feuds, mutual stabbings and theoretical arguments that they had a great deal of the craving for domination which belongs to the disputes of criminal gangs. The hands of many great theoreticians, whose heads were cut off amidst dishonor and shamelessness, had been bloodstained and their mouths had all too well known the art of lying and cheating world public opinion. In 1925, Lev Trotsky announced publicly that Lenin's *Testament* did not exist at all.[11] In his own testimony, written a few days before his own arrest, Bukharin wrote that "for seven years he had not had a shadow of disagreement with the Party"[12] and these seven years witnessed Trotsky's deportation, the tragedies of collectivization and mass starvation, the suffocating policy in the world of arts and literature, the criminal purges preceding his own trial of 1938 and so many other events and developments including the betrayal of the Communists and Social-

Democrats in Germany which made it easier for Hitler to take power. There were too many lies and too much injustice committed or ignored by them. In 1917 and later, they themselves opened Pandora's box with its terrifying calamities and violence. The sword was raised by them and it fell upon their necks.

In their love for the proletariat and their devotion to the dictatorship of the proletariat they separated themselves from humanity. They considered it worthwhile to exterminate a good part of the human race and the results were obvious. They had convinced themselves that they would serve the Party and its interests and by so doing they cast away many traditional and millenial ethical values by which mankind lived, enriched itself, flourished and survived. It was very rare for any of them to have the guts to resist Stalin's despotism and bloody tyranny until they found themselves in a mortal trap and vicious circle.

With due respect for their sufferings and for the ordeals of their families and friends, one must wait for some new facts and new discoveries about the past in order to make, if it is possible, a relatively final judgement about them. The Communists were naturally atheists with a passionate zeal for building a classless society predicted by Marx. For them, death did not contain any great mystery but the fame and immortality of the names in the annals of Communist martyrdom had unleashed an unparalleled enthusiasm. Of enormous significance for this enthusiasm was the mythology of Communism and reflections on what the future generations and history itself would think about each of them. Did Lev Trotsky and Nikolai Bukharin think that they had co-operated with those dark forces that would kill them in the process of constructing that society which anathematized them not only during their worst foe's reign, but for many decades after the death of the tyrant as well? It was said about Trotsky that he would not hesitate to die if there would be enough eyes to observe the beautiful scene of his death. The cruel Stalin seemed to know this theatrical passion for death and the death-wish, so many times recorded in the memoirs of survivors, and did his best to deprive them of everything that creates such an environment or guarantees at least the knowledge of the facts by a grateful posterity. They had reasons to dislike him even if they died with his name in their mouth, but perhaps they under-estimated his contempt for human beings and his sinister appreciation of human aspirations and vanities.

Still, the image of these great martyrs tortures our imagination and provokes further thoughts. In their tremendous stoicism and deprivations, these people apparently reached the border, where the Marxist-Leninist social science invades the area of faith and self-sacrificial service to humanity. These hair-raising events epitomize the life-and-death struggle between the Stalinist "yesmen" and the followers of

Lenin and Trotsky who would have definitely desisted from his cannibalistic methods once the civil war was over and the revolution gained the upper hand. This feud is sharply analogous to the rivalry between the "bitches" and "thieves" in the criminal world: "bitches" had a few regulations to get along among themselves, while the "thieves" had at least their own law. The cruelty which accompanied the extermination of the thousands of Party members who had a few years ago been their comrades-in-arms, overwhelms and defies any plausible explanations. The cannibalism that had been previously directed towards the "exploiting classes" now turned against their own brethren in the Marxist faith. But the sadism was sharpened and deepened by the clear fact that the Trotskyites were more devoted to the spirit of their faith while for Stalinists it had been thwarted to the level of mere lip-service. In numerous cases the watchmen and guardians were insulted as "fascists", and "non-Communists".

However morbid and inhuman Soviet reality was from the first days of its existence, one can see in these events an embryo of the developments which were stifled in its conception. Essentially, the opposition, with its courageous challenge to Stalin's totalitarian regime, could have been transformed into another, second Party which ought to have coexisted with the ruling Party. Under normal conditions, this second Party, recruiting the best members of society in opposition to Stalin could have grown to become a formidable and influential force in the country with implications which would be difficult to foresee. But the above-described events show once more that the Party-based regime could not endure any deviation from its announced line as well as any opposition to the leadership which blindly obeyed its leader who by that time suffered from all the obvious symptoms of a blood-thirsty maniac and vampire. The way these Marxist-Leninist martyrs were isolated and strangled illustrates that there might be no potential force inside the Party which could resist its main and general line to subjugate and squeeze everything below it. The Party mechanism of adopting and rearing its members is built in such a sophisticated way that only a minority might disagree with its line in order to be quickly suppressed by the Party leaders, striving to keep the reins of power in their hands and never failing to use the Party resources of repression in cases of emergency even at the stage of its birth. The Party treats those who deviate from its general line not so much as non-Party members but as renegades and non-beings who should be exterminated as soon as possible.

The post-Stalinist period, especially since the mid-1960's, introduced another great change in this dramatic aspect of the Party's manner of operation. A rather substantial group of Soviet intellectuals was expelled around 1968 from the Party and almost each of them at this or

another stage of their outspoken activities prior to the expulsion from the Party made an attempt to defend their position by Party-spirited statements and arguments. Among these we see a number of prominent intellectuals such as Petr Grigorenko, Zinajda Grigorenko, Boris Shragin, Grigorij Svirskij, Lev Kopelev, Victor Nekrasov, Ljudmila Alekseeva, Alexander Zinovyev and others. While they were in the Party, some of them defended their views as Marxist-Leninist but, after a number of years, there was little trace of Marxism-Leninism in their writings.

The way the Constitution of the Party is worded allows it to exclude almost any one who might express his or her own opinion. Any person who dares to sign a petition authored by somebody else might be accused of factionalism, clannishness and cliquishness. The Party ejected these people so quickly that few people were amazed at this. The way they were treated later on was more interesting and amazing. When a person repented for his criminal actions, repeatedly exclaimed at various levels *mea culpa*, and disclosed the names of those who had been distributing the petitions to be signed, his Party membership could be retained although in some cases Party members were still expelled. An important aspect in the eyes of the Party authorities was whether the expelled person applied for reinstatement in the Party or not. Those who applied, but were denied readmission to the Party were considered much more reliable people than those strange persons who did not even want to make the attempt. This was interpreted as a sign of arrogance and contempt towards the Party and such a person could be subsequently repressed even more cruelly. Only in rare cases were those expelled from the Party not fired from their job, and those who had been expelled understood relatively soon, if not immediately, the hopelessness of their situation. After that, they either applied for readmission to the Party with the adequate breast-beating and promises of rebukeless future behavior or stayed away, living in such a manner that even the most suspicious and demanding attention would find nothing wrong in their behavior for the years to come. My personal observations of such people's behavior convinced me that psychologically they had undergone a tremendous and unhealable trauma.

Those readmitted to the Party were very intelligent and nice people. They belonged to the milieu of the more or less independent intelligentsia which became rather challenging in the mid-1960's. These Party members had felt it to be almost a categorical imperative to express their views along with other non-Party members. By so doing they rose in their own eyes and in the eyes of their friends, but the disastrous retribution never failed to befall them in the succeeding weeks. As Party members, they were much more tightly chained to the chariot of power and taken to task. The Party interrogators required

them to disclose the names of those persons from whom they had obtained the petitions they signed[13] and this was almost equivalent to becoming stool-pigeons for the KGB, a role utterly despicable and absolutely harmful for the dignity of a person who had signed that petition only to prove his integrity in the first place. However, if such a person, thinking about his job, publications and the necessity to support his family, agreed to co-operate with the authorities, he was mercilessly ostracized by the intelligentsia's public opinion and found himself in a morally unhealthy and detrimental state of mind even though he was not fired from his job and retained Party membership with a last stern warning. No reasonable person in this case could have any respect for the Party institutions and his Party-carded colleagues. The situation reminded them quite often of a poor girl in a brothel who announced that she was not going to be engaged in the dirty business of prostitution while still living in the house of ill-repute and was instantly reminded that unless she disavows her public statements, which benefit the campaign constantly launched by the enemies of the noble institution, she would be ejected from the trade-union of whores and thrown out penniless onto the street, if not incarcerated immediately.

This is painful, but it might be worse. Another person could find the situation rather unpleasant but reject any co-operation with the Party interrogators. This person will be expelled from the Party and then from his or her job and be blacklisted. Many people will advise this person to apply for readmission to the Party and they will be among the first to gossip about him after he is forced to do it. The quickest way to be readmitted is to write an article or make a speech in praise of Lenin. I know several cases like this and I am quite amazed how low they estimate their Lenin to be. Suppressing all of his inner voices and disgust towards the Party, the person in question would apply, recant, receive the due amount of beating and warning, and finally be reappointed to his former or another job with demotion, shame, backbiting and constant pain in his heart and conscience.

It might be still worse. A person could sign a petition, make a public speech or even publish a book like *The Yawning Heights*, where all persons and phenomena are called by their own names. Under no conditions would such a person agree to repent, for that would mean nothing more or less than to become a turncoat, a werewolf, a character with two faces. People like Boris Shragin, Grigorij Svirskij, Efim Etkind, Ljudmila Alekseeva, Alexander Zinovyev and some others were expelled from the Party, fired from their job, prohibited from publishing anything under their own names and thus commenced their endless journey to Calvary. Rare persons might keep silent, hide themselves if they could afford it with the help of their working spouse or relatives and work on a book which would be published under the

names of their friends or under their own name in a few years when they would be forgotten and partially forgiven.

The worst case is when the Party member wants to prove his Party affiliation in public. In this case his fate will remind others of the Trotskyites' ordeal in Vorkuta in 1937-38. The ailing and aging Aleksej Kosterin, a long-time Party member and former prisoner, was expelled from the Party three weeks before his death, after having signed a number of petitions in 1968.[14] Valery Pavlinčuk, who had been also expelled from the Party in the Spring of 1968, signed with A. Kosterin an appeal in support of the Prague Spring. Ivan Jachimovič, together with Petr Grigorenko, warned the Czechoslovak Government about the imminent invasion of the Soviet troops into their country. Valery Pavlinčuk died in the middle of the same Summer. Aleksej Kosterin died of a heart attack in the next Fall. Ivan Jachimovič was confined to a mental hospital and was said to have been released after repenting. Petr Grigorenko was soon confined to the dreadful Černjachovsk mental hospital where he spent five years and, after having continued his struggle against the government, was allowed to leave Russia for a short period with the succeeding and quiet withdrawal of his Soviet citizenship. The Communist Party cannot afford to allow any of its former members to defend their moral righteousness within the frames of the same Party and its principles. A difficult ordeal fell upon Leonid Pljušč, a mathematician from Kiev with pro-Communist ideology who was confined for many years in a terrifying mental hospital with torture and injections until he was released from the hospital in order to leave immediately for Western Europe.[15] The case of Alexander Zinovyev is even more incredible. While still a Party member, a professor of formal logic at Moscow University and a leading research scholar in the Academy of Sciences, he published abroad his Swiftian parody of the Soviet society, Ibansk, located on the river Ibaniuchka with the Ibanites building Ibanism and where various scholars, mainly named Ibanov and Ibanova, propagate the theory of Ibanism. Ibansk, is a double pun, it is the place where Russian Ivans are screwed. In this masterpiece, Zinovyev described the Party, called by him the bratia-clique.[16] On the day when the publication of the book in the West was made known, Zinovyev was expelled from the Party and fired from his prestigious positions. For many months he was in great danger because he, a Party member, defiled the Party and its society. But he was later released abroad, perhaps because he did not and could not defend his position from the Party line.

One is amazed at the cruelty with which the Party treats her own sons and daughters the day they are expelled from it. More than anything else, it is this feature that reveals its criminal nature. What are the goals and nature of this organization with one-way traffic? You can

enter it through strait gates but there is no exit and nobody, of course, is allowed to quit it voluntarily. Even professional criminals belonging to the mafia or to the Russian thieves' *kodlo* can quit the gang safely if they want to end their criminal life without denouncing the members of their gangs. The impossibility of quitting the Party without great turmoil and disaster in life is one of the most foreboding signs of its life.

Strangely enough, out of so many former Party members who had been expelled and with whom I had the luck to be acquainted or maintain a friendship, no one expressed any regret for having quit this body. The wound inflicted upon their soul does not heal even several decades after leaving the Party. When one meets these otherwise very intelligent and energetic people, one cannot avoid feeling that the sense of pain is still present in their soul. Only God knows what has happened to their souls while they belonged to the Party, but its claws seem to have left serious scratches, scars or sores. One cannot get rid of the feeling that these people are still deprived of the cheerfulness and joy which are inherent to so many other people inhabiting our globe. They need faith, but something prevents them from obtaining it anywhere beyond the body to which they no longer belong.

However, I will never forget a scene in Petr Grigorenko's apartment in New York during the Fall of 1984, where the sick and partially paralyzed general spent his recent years. The General was speaking with visible difficulty and he could hardly get up and sit down himself without his friends' help. I asked him whether he would like me to recite some prayers, including the "Our Father". He nodded. When I began to say the prayer, his right hand, almost entirely paralyzed, started to move upwards, slowly, painfully, but stubbornly. His three fingers, after almost a minute of rising up, touched his forehead and then went down to touch his belly. After several decades in the Communist Party and the Godless Red Army, the former Soviet general tried to cross himself. His hand's motion up and down was relatively successful, but without my help the three fingers of his paralyzed hand could not touch the right shoulder. I helped him and saw the sparks of satisfaction in his eyes. Ultimately, his right hand touched the left shoulder as well. The obstinate General did his duty. He prayed to God. I could not help thinking that this moment was almost a momentous occasion in the history of the Soviet Communist Party. I was ready to weep and smile at the same time.

During its almost one hundred years of existence, the Communist Party has dealt with so many theories and personalities that it seems to be afraid of very few things in the world. The Party ideology can swallow almost everything beginning with terrorism and anarchism up to highly refined philosophies of idealism and mysticism. There is little doubt that the Party's well-paid philosophers could rebuff without any

delay all anti-Marxist theories and accusations. Along with that, the Party only rarely refuses to welcome back to its membership its own prodigal sons who had been expelled from the Party in the 1930's or the 1940's, imprisoned and then released by Khrushchev's decree. Long years of imprisonment in Stalin's hellish camps are too hard an experience and even the worst scoundrels functioning in the Party might feel some compassion for these innocent victims of their brutal Party machine. Each of them could be easily caught by that machine and ground into powder.

Prison-camp experience for many Party members could loosen our imagination beyond all bounds. To be arrested for no reason at all, to be tortured and live worse than swine for many months under prison interrogation and sadism, to see one's own family with one's beloved wife and adorable children ruined for good, to know that your wife and daughter were also imprisoned and quite often dishonored, to see not thousands, but millions of other people in the same situation, to work cutting wood and producing coal in the North and Siberia with no women and children around for many years, to live on a meagre starvation diet without seeing a piece of proper meat, a slice of an apple, an orange or just a piece of candy for years, to observe the brutality of Party-carded guardians after years of discussions with highly educated and knowledgeable scholars and specialists who studied the structure of society, the psychology of human beings and the real nature of the Party to which they belonged prior to their imprisonment, to have seen and talked with various foreigners also imprisoned by the Soviets, as well as with the many people from the Western parts of the Soviet Empire occupied recently by the Soviet army ... after many sleepless nights, after innumerable funny stories about Lenin, Stalin and all the other leaders of the Party, after having understood with your liver and intestines that the Communist Party was the most sordid invention of the devil ... what would be one's decision after being ultimately released from these prisons and once again given an opportunity to rejoin the Communist Party?

In the mid-1950's, these people were released and, with some hesitation, ultimately allowed to return to their own cities in order to see the people who had expelled them from the Party and those stool-pigeons who had betrayed them to the state security watchdogs. Reality was not propitious for those who would imitate the Count of Monte Cristo or Jean Valjean, for the cheering wheel from top to bottom was handled by those who had assisted Stalin in imprisoning and killing the millions. Those who had cherished any ideas of revenge remained in the houses of incarceration. Each of them was ceaselessly admonished to acknowledge their past mistakes and behave prudently while enjoying the relative freedom and the new opportunities for

working, talking and family-building. And they were persistently reminded that the all-forgiving Party not only bestowed freedom upon them, which they had not necessarily deserved by their obstinate behavior for years, but gave them a chance to re-enter the Party and be like millions of other happy Soviet citizens.

Virtuous and religious people very seldom understand what enormous space for thinking and discovery is unfolded before the people who had given up any hope for the future and for a conscientious life. Those people on the top of the Party hierarchy and on the higher levels of the state security are great experts in human psychology, especially of those who have been squeezed and mutilated by hard prison-camp experience. No doubt, this tremendous institution of the state security with predecessors such as Cheka, OGPU, GPU, NKVD, MVD and MGB until it turned into the Committee with a very modest title - KGB - has launched excessive and sufficient studies into all these areas of human psychology. The majority of people who are imprisoned and separated from their beloved families and jobs are eager to return to a "normal life". What had happened to their personal life and soul is, as a rule, considered an exception, an error of the ever-vigilant state security forces. In such a big state experimenting with social construction, who will argue that one cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs? The whole country cannot be wrong. So many people on the top cannot be scoundrels and murderers. Those people who have been incarcerated together with him could have avoided their hard and ruthless lot, if only they had behaved themselves slightly differently at some stage. After their years of imprisonment, they naturally think differently than those millions who enjoy their life, work, newspapers, sanatoria on the Black Sea, enticing women, good books, comfortable houses where they might be ultimately alone, meaningful jobs with proper salaries and a family. To regain these blessings, ninety-nine inmates out of one hundred would do quite a lot. If pressed properly many will agree to co-operate with the state security as stool-pigeons. As Dostoevsky noted, the inmate dreams day and night about the world at large and about being released from prison. He wants to be like others, and to re-enter the Party is the first step towards regaining his previous position. He joins the Party with the attempt to forget his recent painful experience and his new life begins.

If he does not join the Party, he will not be killed or exiled. He will find it unfeasible to return to his previous job. If he was not a Party member, he could be given his previous job whether he was a scientist or an archeologist. But if he had been a Party member prior to his imprisonment and rejoins the Party, he might become once again a scholar or a scientist in the academic research center, an engineer or a chairman of a collective farm. The Party forgives everything and it will

be able to cope with its returning Party member's complexes. The Party can endure all of his idiosyncrasies and will provide him with available opportunities to heal his wounds. So the person returns to the Party and by his own example proves that the Party itself unfolded its past and made the required surgery: Berija and his bandits had been shot; Stalin's body has been removed from the Mausoleum and buried behind it with a modest marble statue while his name is being removed from important annals and speeches and if not entirely so, then at least he is definitely not as important as Lenin or the present-day leader, whoever that person might be - Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko or Gorbachev. But to remove Stalin from the honor roll, as Khrushchev had once tried, does not make great sense, and the role of great Communist leaders should be understood through the famous laws of dialectical materialism. Who was able to avoid mistakes in his life? Stalin was not God and the Bolsheviks do not believe in God.

Former prisoners who had been sentenced to death return to the Party and work hand-in-hand with those who had denounced them, suppressing their deep-seated thoughts and feelings. A close friend of mine, after six years of imprisonment, returned to Moscow, worked for a while in a second-rate position, re-entered the Party which he despised and was allowed to resume his scholarly studies in which he was quite diligent. His newly acquired Party membership had been burning his heart with shame and remorse until one day when he was once again expelled from this organization for expressing his disagreement with the Party's policy towards the freethinkers of the 1960's. Somehow, his position was not withheld from him on account of some considerations which included his imprisonment under Stalin and only a new clash with the KGB urged his Party leadership to force him to retire much earlier than he intended.

The late academician M.A. Korostovcev, during the investigation of my case by the Oriental Institute's Trade Union, urged me more than anybody else to express my regrets at the fuss made by the enemies of the Soviet country abroad with regard to our letter of the twelve. From his own experience as a prisoner, he knew what Stalinism meant, but by a logic which is beyond my understanding, he tried to prove in public that by these letters, which protested the court trials of expressed convictions and thoughts, we only invited Stalinism back. As we have seen earlier in V. Maksimov's description, the KGB General V. Il'in after eight years of solitary imprisonment was quite enthusiastic in his responsible position of supervising Moscow's writers.[17]

The late director of the Moscow Institute of World Literature, Boris Sučkov, like many other unlucky prisoners, was in N. Janevič's words, a man with a bright strength of mind and talent which was combined with an apparent lack of emotional stability. Sučkov was

imprisoned in 1947 and was sentenced to death as a "British spy" but the death verdict was commuted to twenty-five years in prison. Books will be written in the future about this peculiar personality. During his pretrial interrogations in the presence of the KGB interrogator and face-to-face with his close friend Mikhail P, while sitting comfortably in a chair and smoking the interrogator's cigarettes, Sučkov confessed that after returning from the defeated Germany, Mikhail P., with whom he had organized a terrorist group to assassinate Stalin, had given him a captured German pistol. Years later when already released from prison but not yet a big shot, in the presence of his friends among whom were Lev Kopelev and Mikhail P., Boris Sučkov wept bitterly and begged forgiveness, telling them they had beaten him cruelly and knocked out all his teeth until he yielded to the pressure. Having been released from prison and while climbing up the social staircase, the poor and ambitious Sučkov time and again witnessed quite crazy scenes. Raisa Orlova reports how she was once sitting in her journal editor's office with her back to the door while speaking with a translator M., when suddenly somebody whom Orlova could not yet see entered the room, and the lady M., fainted. It appeared that at that moment, Boris Sučkov entered the room and immediately left. Having recovered, M. explained: "I cannot see this man. He testified as if I had participated together with him in the group to assassinate Stalin! While I did my time I recalled his name with horror!"[18]

Boris Sučkov had a spectacular career and became the head of the World Literature Institute in Moscow, which might mean that the former "spy" became a member of the Soviet *nomenklatura*. On November 11, 1971, this former "prisoner" presented his report on Fyodor Dostoevsky at the solemn meeting dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the author's birthday. The lecture took place at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow with the participation of Party leaders and numerous representatives of the Soviet intelligentsia and society. His report might be considered as the peak of his brilliant career and at the same time a highly ambivalent characterization of Dostoevsky's genius and social outlook. Undoubtedly, Dostoevsky, a great religious thinker and irreconcilable adversary of any ideological totalitarianism, would have been mortally hurt by the Soviet interpretation of his work and novels targeted precisely against their own despotism. The scoundrels, villains and supermen described by Dostoevsky are no more and no less than the numerous personages which inhabit the picturesque and gloomy world of the Communist Party. Proud of the assignment to speak in front of this grand audience, Boris Sučkov reached his personal triumph by presenting the "arch-reactionary Dostoevsky" as a predecessor of the Soviet social and philosophical thought who had been allegedly fighting all of his life against the same enemies detested

by the Soviet system and the Communist Party. Of course, the ideas of Dostoevsky are more than alive now, "for in our day, the struggle between capitalism and the forces of freedom has become unprecedentedly sharp and broad ... All main heroes of Dostoevsky live in the psychological atmosphere of pre-revolutionary times and are internally ready to riot. All his life, Dostoevsky himself carried in himself the riot as well."[19]

At the same time, his speech is enormously important and interesting for its dozens of remarks and statements which show that Boris Sučkov could not forget his terrifying life-experience and there are many phrases in his report which sound like highly loaded criticisms of the regime itself and even of its leaders. They are, of course, presented in an Aesopian language:

> Therefore so hopeless and internally dead, the woodened order, established by the Grand Inquisitor for the happiness of people, is impossible without taking into consideration their strivings and desires as well as making decisions against these strivings and desires, and this happiness cannot be created at the price of killing in people their free will, their dignity, the creative active element, by having turned them into a cattle-like multitude of obedient and thoughtless consumers of living comforts. With no less convincing strength, Dostoevsky has been ruining the idea of the self-will in the personality which stays "beyond good and evil", and the organic bearers of the evil destructive force in his works. Svidrigailov and especially Stavrogin, undoubtedly strong persons, perish, sqeezed to death by their self-love, solitude and soul-frost, the price for their own inhumanity.[20]

Such obviously loaded statements, deep psychological observations and poignant innuendoes saturate his numerous writings which are dedicated to a good number of prominent thinkers and writers such as Thomas Mann, Marcel Proust, Franz Kafka, and others. With his talents and love for literature he was unable to disguise his painful experience, although he tried to perform the tricks of social mimicry and never failed to quote Marx and Lenin at the appropriate places, a method that has been long ago qualified as "putting candles on a wedding pie". A broken and unhappy man, he strained every nerve to gain success in his job, and hired gifted literary scholars to his Institute, published or reprinted literary masterpieces which had been ignored or silenced for decades. His activities did not remain unnoticed by Party-carded persons - including Ovčarenko - who were said to have written a denunciation of Sučkov to the Party's Grand Inquisitor, Mikhail Suslov.[21] Accused of having pursued the wrong literary politics, a

nervous, paranoid and hypersensitive Boris Sučkov rushed to the Central Committee to have an audience with Suslov, but was not received and became so upset and worried in the following days, that another heart attack put an end to his efforts to reach his own personal success and to develop further the Aesopian genre of Soviet literature.

Once not long before his death, Raisa Orlova, herself a Party member for many years, met Boris Sučkov in a writers' hospital as they were both waiting to see their doctor. Sučkov was an old friend of her husband, Lev Kopelev, who had by that time been expelled from the Party for his outspokenness and friendship with Solzhenitsyn. This was the time of slow and deep shifts for the worse in Soviet life, the eve of Solzhenitsyn's deportation and the harrassment of Sakharov. In her words, she asked him whether he was happy with his life. Boris Sučkov was startled: "What are you asking? How can I be happy? I am not so silly. I see everything and understand. Well, your Lev is right."[22]

Until recently, a prominent position at the Central Committee in Moscow was held by R.A. Uljanovskij - a deputy head of the International Affairs Department. He is an orientalist by trade and for more than ten years, from 1957 to 1968, I had the dubious pleasure of meeting him from time to time at the Oriental Institute or some other institutes in Moscow. Before he was promoted to his job at the Central Committee he was a deputy director of the Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences. He deserves at least a few words while we are discussing those who had been expelled from the Party and were afterwards restored.

Rostislav Uljanovskij, a man with an attractive, although frightening appearance, published his book about Mahatma Gandhi in 1931. Mahatma Gandhi and his activities were characterized by this young orientalist and Communist as "imperialism's lackey", "a sly wolf of Indian national-reformism ... bloody betrayals ... political commercialism ... spiritual self-castration", and so on.[23] In the mid-1930's he was imprisoned and, of course, expelled from the Party. His guardians showed leniency towards him and while under arrest and in exile, he was said to have written a booklet about woodcutting. I remember him in 1957-58, when he was working as a deputy editor of *The Problems of Orientalistics*. At that time he was allowed to return to Moscow and to resume his scholarly studies. Being then in his early fifties, he worked hard and his colleagues told me that he was splendid in his field of economics, could count extremely well in his head, but suffered from painful headaches.

I knew some facts about his past. In 1958 he submitted his thesis and was incredibly excited on the day of his defence. I remember him obsequiously greeting others, including those with whom he had never

even been acquainted. Knowing that he had been in prison, I sympathized with him, but at the same time I saw some arrogance and coldness on his face which was soon going to thrive turbulently. He was to become the deputy director of the Oriental Institute and was a cause of the untimely death of Dr. Jurij Roerich in the Spring of 1960. When the Buddhist masterpiece *Dhammapada,* edited by Roerich, was published, a huge scandal burst out at the Oriental Institute (by that time called the Institute of Asian and African Peoples) because of the wrath in the Central Committee. It is not excluded at all that the call from the Central Committee was organized by R. Uljanovskij himself, who was aspiring to climb upwards. At that time, Uljanovskij was rumored to have said right in the presence of Dr. Jurij Roerich that he could not understand what this man, who had recently returned from India to Russia, could do at that Institute.[24] Dr. Roerich died a few days after that from a heart attack. The reaction of the orientalists was quite apparent. A friend of mine, A.M., also a Party member, told me several years later that among Moscow's Indologists the opinion prevailed that Stalin would have been right and commended if he had executed Rostislav Uljanovskij while the latter was still young.

I clearly remember a meeting in the Institute Party Committee, to which we, the PhD candidates, were summoned in the late Autumn of 1959. To my great amazement, Rostislav Uljanovskij informed us about the need to leave for a collective farm for half a month in order to fulfill our duty of picking potatoes on a Moscow suburban collective farm. This business was detested by all the scholars and PhD students. To live in a village in dirty huts, usually on the floor among bedbugs and spiders and to work in the disgusting late Autumn weather in snow-blanketed fields amidst village peasants who hated the city newcomers, did not bring any great joy to the orientalists who had their own urgent things to attend to, including their families, children and ailing parents.

There were about twenty young scholars at the meeting. It was already late and as we could see the descending darkness and the chilling rain through the windows while listening to Uljanovskij's eloquent explanations, we wondered why each of us should give up our urgent studies and leave the next day for Volokolamsk to help collective farmers reap their harvest from under the early snow. I tried to understand what had made this respectable and obviously educated person become engaged in this detestable business of sending people with so little enthusiasm to the uprooted and poverty-stricken village, in which the peasants themselves did not want to work for the government under any conditions. Uljanovskij was well-dressed and looked very solemn. There were no cheap phrases in his mouth, no citations from Khrushchev's recent statements, no smiles. He was well-aware that

none of us was overly happy to leave our warm apartments for hard work in a distant village. But he also understood that two weeks of hard work on the collective farm, along with drinking, chasing after girls and leisurely conversations was no big deal as well. He simply stated that the Moscow Party Committee asked the Institute Party Committee to send immediately twenty-four persons to the collective farm. His ten-minute speech was not actually needed. As usual, it was sufficient to say that we should go. No one among the PhD candidates, who were all eager to be hired by the Institute at the end of their three-year period of studies, seemed to be opposed.

Uljanovskij was seated in his chair, making his speech without being pompous. He clearly enjoyed his own voice and eloquence. He said that our fathers and elder brothers had experienced greater hardships and grievances during the Revolution and the succeeding years. Most probably, he himself recalled at that moment his own prison-camp years and thought what a trifle it was to go to a village for a fortnight. He might have thought that for him, with a name so close to the name of the country's founder, Vladimir Uljanov, it was high time to sit in a better and more solid position, but not to convince these non-Party sucklings to pack up for an Autumn journey to the village. In addition, it was quite obvious to everybody in the room, including himself, that our journey to the village would be neither significant nor very productive. But at that time, the fifty-year-old Uljanovskij needed this job for not entirely obscure reasons. Soon he was appointed as a deputy director of the Institute. He was climbing up; his papers, lectures and speeches were listened to by many as faithful expressions of the official Party line. To be promoted higher, he needed this Party job, considered empty and superfluous by many others.

Uljanovskij knew what he was doing. A former prisoner, restored in the Party, he was repeatedly sent abroad to the oriental countries. I remember his speech after his first trip to India. His first journey to India, the country of miracles, to present lectures in English to various university audiences, was incomparably more pleasant and dignified than to sit and rot behind barbed wire and iron bars. After his return, he was speaking to an audience of about a hundred orientalists with a shining face and glittering eyes. He was not discussing ancient linguistics or literary monuments, but the crucial lines of Soviet politics in international affairs and presenting his own views on the present and future economic and political situation of oriental countries. He visited many countries of the East, including India, Burma, and Pakistan. His trip to these countries was naturally a great success, especially in his own eyes and interpretation, but much more important was the fact that he had been trusted by the Party's Central Commiittee, for which he was now going to prepare a detailed account of his trip, conversations,

observations and conclusions. Uljanovskij did all he could to conceal his excitement, but the latter was evident. At least from the official standpoint and superficial files, the dark past had been thrown into oblivion. He had become once again an important official who would prescribe and recommend some main avenues of Soviet politics towards India and the countries of the Third World. He was going to publish his *Mahatma Gandhi* for the second time with a new preface, where one would not find any straightforward traces of the early 1930's. That had been long ago! Now one can transform India and other countries with more sophisticated policies and subtler intrigues.

So he is finally able to contribute to India's and the East's Communist future. He writes books and numerous articles on these subjects, in which one cannot find too much sense. In these articles, one will be unable to recognize the real face of Asia or its needs, but one can definitely see the Communist Party's line and its vital interests in them. Thousands of Asian and African Communists will carefully study these articles and books. Later on, Rostislav Uljanovskij will be transferred to the Central Committee of the Communist Party by a spectacular promotion, for former prisoners are usually never hired for work in that institution. His name will be frequently mentioned on the first pages of the Soviet newspapers, especially *Pravda*, where Rostislav Uljanovskij, together with the Party leaders, will meet foreign delegations, government teams at the Moscow airport and par- ticipate in the discussions with them. His importance will significantly change his life-style, his milieu, his relationships with people. He will create awe in them and they will try to catch his glance in order to greet him when he appears in public meetings and places. And only a few people know his real thoughts about India and the other countries of the East that gradually fall under the Soviet umbrella. But what does he really think about his prison experience, about his undisguised co- operation with the KGB, about the present-day Soviet leaders and about his ruined and strained family life and meaningless existence in general, the life amidst comforts and palace-like luxuries?

I never knew Rostislav Uljanovskij closely and I wonder if anyone had the privilege of being his close friend. There was a wolf's expression in his face, something that would never attract me personally to him. This man seems to stay above human emotions or they serve him only to achieve his ambitious goals, for in less than ten years after his return from exile, he made an enormous career. He worked hard. I do not know anything about his family and have no idea whether his wife was waiting for him throughout those difficult years. I wonder whether he is a Marxist in his heart or not. Most probably he is and if so he must be a very flexible man, for he is not a fool and he should know that he is surrounded by many who only claim to be Marxists. My

feeling is that it is his ambition and the unquenchable passion to rule others that motivate his actions.

But I have had the luck to know more or less closely another person who had been expelled from the Party in the late 1940's, imprisoned for a number of years, restored to the Party after Stalin's death, and was able to have a relatively successful career in the Soviet Academy of Sciences. We were in close touch with him for more than five days while I happened to be with my family in London in the late 1970's. I was there for a month to study some materials in the British Museum and he appeared in Great Britain for a month to visit various universities, to meet with some leading Arabists and to work for a while in the British Museum Archives as well. I will call him Stanislav Fromkin so as not to hurt him in the eyes of his superiors.

Stanislav Fromkin was by that time in his early sixties. He is undoubtedly an intelligent man, with relatively good English and a very impressive knowledge of Arabic languages. He is a well-read, cultured person who is interested in music and painting and was then enjoying the architecture of London and the beauty of its streets. During the days of our long conversations there was a heavy snowstorm in London and we went strolling along Fleet and Strand Street, across Trafalgar Square. Together we saw the monuments of Admiral Nelson, stayed at the White Hall, thinking of Charles I and Sir Walter Raleigh, and imagined the moments when they braved their execution. We went together to see the Tower of London and many other scenes which stood before Raleigh during the time of his own interrogation and incarceration.

The way we met was rather amusing. While I was in England, a British colleague of mine who specializes in oriental religions told me that a Soviet specialist on the Arab World was going to visit him in his School of Oriental Studies and he inquired quite politely whether I would be interested to see him. He mentioned the name of Dr. Stanislav Fromkin saying that Dr. Fromkin was coming to London for approximately ten days and that it would be fun for all of us to get together. My London colleague had a Leftist past and he was curious to see how two different Russians would meet each other: Dr. Fromkin, an official Soviet scholar, undoubtedly a Party member and perhaps even a Soviet spy, as some of his colleagues said, and myself, an orientalist by background and an exile from the Soviet Union who is quite critical about the Soviet regime.

I was almost dumbfounded when I received this call from my London colleague. While I was in Russia, I knew Stanislav Fromkin personally and I heard a great deal about him from my close friends. He taught the history of the Middle East at the Oriental Institute in the late 1940's before he was arrested and we used to greet each other at

that time when we met, although then we were not at all so close as would enable me to know anything about his ordeal. His disappearance into the Gulag and the subsequent rumors about his anti-Party activities fixed my attention on his personality. In 1956 I met him quite often in the library of the Oriental Institute, where he impressed me enormously as a diligent reader of thick volumes. Some of my friends looked at him with respect and whispered to each other that the man had been imprisoned for ten years, although I knew that it was less. But even the six and a half year incarceration was quite enough to rekindle my curiosity, mixed with awe and sometimes even envy. In the late 1950's and later on, one could often observe these feelings towards former prisoners among younger and intelligent persons.

In less than two years after his return, he began climbing up the ladder of success and very soon he became the Chairman of the Department of Arab Countries in our Institute. In the mid-1960's, he moved to the Institute of World Economics, but was still seen quite often in our Institute and was also an influential member of the Institute's Scholarly Council. When we met each other in the libraries or in the long corridors of our Institute, we greeted each other and sometimes even exchanged a few words. Once I brought a graduate from the University to him and I was amazed how quickly my recommendation to accept the capable graduate, who was semi-Jewish in his background, worked. Dr. Fromkin adopted my recommendation without any hesitation. Besides that, being a member of the editorial board at the publishing house where I published my books, I was pleased to observe that every time my proposal was considered, Dr. Stanislav Fromkin said kind words about my manuscripts.

My attitude towards him had been, however, cautious while we were in Moscow. We were never close friends and never socialized. I knew that he was a Party member and that was enough to keep me away from him. But there was something in his biography which was worse than that. An intimate friend of mine, F.M., who had been himself a former prisoner and a Party member, repeatedly told me things about Stanislav Fromkin and I had few reasons to distrust his stories.

My friend's story about Stanislav Fromkin was scary. F.M. was a decent man. He enjoyed my full confidence. A former prisoner, he listened to my confessions about my summons to the KGB and my conversations with the interrogators. I used to tell him about my relationships with foreigners and he brought me into his close circle of friends. If my friend, F.M., had the slightest intention of denouncing me, he had more than one opportunity for that. I have trusted F.M. to the extent that I am ashamed now even to suggest that he could betray me.

Many times, F.M. told me that he had known Stanislav Fromkin during the period prior to their imprisonment. Fromkin had been a recent World War veteran and F.M. discussed with him all kinds of painful questions which bothered him in those uneasy years. More often than not, Stanislav expressed his anti-Stalinist views and when F.M. tried to calm him, the latter invariably expressed his full contempt towards the existing power. Unlike my friend, F.M., Stanislav was not Jewish, although only in London was this finally made clear to me. For many years I was under the impression that Stanislav was Jewish. Under the Soviet system, Jews are much more discriminated against and per- secuted; therefore my sympathies to Fromkin, despite my best friend's narration, did not fluctuate too wildly.

F.M. told me confidentially that when both of them were arrested in the late 1940's, the bulk of the testimony against him during the interrogation stage was provided by Stanislav Fromkin. Contrary to all expectations, Fromkin sang like a canary during his interrogation period. Former prisoners are not foolish and they do not judge others too easily because they can understand that the testimony and confessions were extorted under duress. But it was even more amazing that during the reconsideration of the case of another prisoner who had been friendly with F.M. and Stanislav Fromkin before their imprisonment, Fromkin almost voluntarily gave his testimony to the interrogator and their common friend was not granted any leniency. If Fromkin had not given any testimony in that case, his future would not have been jeopardized; he was at that time in the Arkhangelsk area, engaged in the hard job of cutting wool and rafting timber. After his release from the prison camp, F.M. did not continue any close relationship with Stanislav Fromkin. However, I never discerned any trace of hatred or contempt in his words with regard to his former friend.

Once, around 1965, I was listening to the speech of Stanislav Fromkin at the public meeting where one scholar was blamed for his anti-Semitic denunciations. Fromkin's speech was brief and colorful. He said that people who used to send denunciations like those in question could trigger once more the creation of prison camps where inmates would bear numbers on their backs, hands and knees. I was profoundly stirred by his speech and shook his hand after the meeting. Since then, I was not actually in touch with him. During my ordeal, I never saw him. For some reason, he was not present at that Enlarged Scholarly Council which expelled me from the Institute.

For more than ten years after my expulsion from the Oriental Institute and six years after leaving Russia, a great deal of water had flowed under the bridge. My relationships with F.M. were discontinued as of 1968. I was inclined to blame him for his alienation from me in those painful years. To a great extent, I reconsidered my judgement

about F.M. and did not feel myself bound by any moral commitments towards him.

When I was in England, I struggled inwardly as to whether I should meet Stanislav Fromkin at all. Why should I meet him, really? He had never been my friend. We had never been very close colleagues. His prison-camp experience frightened me. Although I could now distrust the emotions of my former friend, F.M., who avoided me in the time of my ordeal, I did not think that his story was not properly verified. I have no illusions about who is allowed to leave Russia for Western Europe on a short trip, and I had serious reasons to believe that Stanislav Fromkin had arrived in England with those specific and regrettable commitments which he would not divulge to me under any conditions.

But I did not see many people from Russia and my anxiety about the country which had been my motherland urged me to agree at least to meet him if he wanted such a get-together himself. I do not think that he had a special intention to see me while I was in London, but this is not entirely excluded. I was inclined to say "no", but at the last moment I said that if he wished, I would meet him.

The morning Dr. Fromkin visited my London friend, I was expecting his call and was quite prepared to come to his office at the School of Oriental Studies. I was slightly dubious whether the Soviet visitor would like to see me, a person blacklisted once upon a time by his authorities and by no means forgiven since. I was prepared to avoid the mention of all my friends in his presence, but otherwise I was not going to hide any of my thoughts, especially since I wrote and spoke openly in public after my arrival in the West.

My telephone rang and my London friend said that Dr. Stanislav Fromkin had expressed his desire to see me. I rushed into his office and saw, perhaps for the first time since my departure from Russia, one of the Soviet men with whom I was on speaking terms. Fromkin had changed slightly over the several years that I had not seen him. He had become more solid and stout. His face, when he saw me, was slightly pale because neither of us knew exactly whether just to shake hands or to embrace each other in a Russian way. To my astonishment, he expressed a desire to embrace.

I was intrigued and excited by this meeting. Whatever background our rendezvous had, he was a living person from the country which I loved and whose culture was still my own. The second thing that amazed me after the embrace was that he rebuked me for not having telephoned him on the eve of my departure in order to bid farewell. We never had such a close relationship. I did not call anybody on the level of Fromkin. It never even entered my mind to call anyone like Fromkin. At the same time, my telephone call to persons like Fromkin

could have been interpreted as a provocation on my part. But he sounded very serious and sincere when we were speaking Russian with each other in the presence of our British host who could scarcely conceal his excitement at the unexpected meeting of two such different Russians.

I was glad that I had overcome my hesitation. We did not touch on any political subject, but I had a chance to ask him about various persons who still worked in the world of Soviet orientalistics. Of course, I avoided all those names which could endanger the lives of my friends. Along with that, some deep-seated psychological shifts took place in my soul, for in the eyes of people like Stanislav Fromkin, I remained dead for many years and now I was alive once again. We definitely found each other in a desert of Western life and we were attracted to each other, seeing a great deal of topics which we could discuss.

Another curious scene took place on that day. Both of us were invited to a lunch given by the Chairman of the Department with which I was associated during my stay in London. He was a typical British gentleman who did not actually understand that two different Russians were invited by him to his lunch, at which about forty other people were present and were thoroughly enjoying the wines while awaiting the roast-beef. The Chairman of the Department, a bald-headed man in his sixties, introduced Dr. Stanislav Fromkin as a guest from the Soviet Academy of Sciences and he pointed me out by innocently saying that before my departure from Russia we had been working together at the same Institute. Everybody around us smiled. I shivered. At that moment, I heard a click in my soul. For years, I felt separated from the country which I had to flee. For years I had a kind of false guilt that I had left the country where I was unable to feed my family and where the Damocles' sword of imprisonment hung suspended over my head. God knows by what luck and providence I was able to leave the country in 1972. Now it was so simple: Dr. Fromkin and myself had been working at the same Institute until I departed. The victim and the executioner were brought together. Fromkin was supposed to have been among those who expelled me from the Academy of Sciences and, naturally, I could not expect him to have, at some stage, defended me, a person who tried to say a kind word about those Soviet prisoners to whom he himself had once belonged.

In the succeeding five days we were almost inseparable. We met each other early in the morning and parted after midnight. There were aspects of his life which I did not dare raise by my questions. Now I almost regret not doing that. The relationship with him was so important for me, who had been in the early 1960's his junior colleague, that I tried not to frighten the bird. He answered many of my questions and I had the unparalleled occasion to see the mentality of a

person who had almost approached the level of the *nomenklatura*. Now that Stanislav Fromkin has left the Oriental Institute, he is working as a deputy director of another prominent academic research institute.

Our conversations were naturally reminiscent of those between sophisticated and subtle diplomats who try to avoid sharp angles but from time to time we were fantastically sincere with each other. He did not say anything obvious against the Soviet system, but I could understand some things between the lines. He avoided any sharp statements about Babadjan Gafurov or Vadim Solncev, who had been my enemies. He let me know that Gafurov and Solncev could have done nothing in the situation because actually they had been ordered to behave along definite lines towards myself and some of my colleagues who had signed the petitions. It was he who said that Gafurov called his deputy Achramovič "a bitch" (*suka*). He did not like Academician Sakharov and found that his activities had, as a matter of fact, worsened the situation in the country. When I argued with him, it appeared that he disliked him because his wife had been allegedly buying a great amount of food in special and privileged shops. Knowing Sakharov and his generosity to everyone around himself, I tried to refute this allegation and some others as well. To my amazement, Stanislav did not argue with me. He did not say many good things about Solzhenitsyn, but it appeared that he had not read much beyond what was published in the Soviet Union.

He blamed Soviet dissidents for reasons which were not clear to me. I disagreed with him, but he had so many times voted during his Party meetings for the expulsion of persons like myself and many others, that he had to think negatively about all those people. In the main, his non-accepting attitude towards the dissident movement could be interpreted in several ways, including the movement's final ineffectiveness, its inability to explain the horrible society in its entire ugliness and to see real ways of transforming the society. At the same time, the dissidents placed all of the Party members into the unpleasant and morally dubious position of defending, blaming and letting them perish, with their own subsequent and inevitable moral degradation.

He was a person who still recalled his battle experience during World War Two. He had finished the war as a Captain and to some extent this determined our relationships in those days. I had to accept his military superiority since I was only a Lieutenant in the reserves. Until our last day, we avoided the subject connected with his prison past and even on the last day, I was unable to touch this subject in the depth I wished. Neither could I mention to him what I had heard about him from my friend, F.M., who still remained in Russia.

Several times, we sat together at the table in the house I was renting for a month with my wife. He was not drinking too much, but several

times we toasted our families and the better future of Russia. Because we usually say grace at the table, I asked him whether it would be all right with him if we would pray. He gladly accepted this and I saw on his face a really solemn expression. I was pretty sure that this Party member knew the benefits of prayer and of the meditative life in general. He liked to talk about the mysticism of Suffism. He spoke with my wife and asked us about our children. At those moments, I felt in a very acute way that he witnessed the fact of our being alive, almost resurrected, after the Institute to which he belonged condemned me to death. I undertood that he had been almost convinced that I would perish at some stage but now he was happy to see me alive and flourishing, under his eyes, far from being a failure. The house we were renting was not luxurious, but it was much more comfortable and spacious than the apartments owned by some of his well-established colleagues. At one moment, when we were both serious and open, I asked him whether God existed. His face became pensive and he replied in a slow manner: "In response to similar questions, Buddha advised that one preserve noble silence!"

One evening, we attended the symphony, conducted by a Russian friend of mine while another close Russian friend played the violin. Their success was smashing. In the interval, we hastened to the conductor's room. Both the conductor and the violinist were standing among the musicians and Stanislav embraced each of them, exiles from Russia like myself. He was not afraid to embrace the exiled musicians in the presence of many others. After the concert, we visited the conductor's house, comfortable and fashionable. Our talk continued until late after midnight. God knows what was in his mind while he was sitting among all of us and chatting about music, recent Russian exiles like Rostropovich and Kondrashin, and about literature, time and again mentioning names of authors who were prohibited in Russia. Always restrained and checking his words, Stanislav relaxed and seemed to be three minutes away from the line of freedom. But his beloved wife, who took care of him while he was in the prison camp, remained in Russia together with his daughter. There were also some other limitations upon him, but he must have thought about the splendid books he could write about his own experience and acquaintances. However, nothing in his words or in his eyes even suggested that he was pondering these vital issues. When the time came to leave their house, Stanislav told us a story about an ancient Iranian Padishah who was imprisoned, dishonored, but welcomed for a day by generous Moslems. He then became silent for a long time and when asked about the cause for this, he responded meditatively: "May my silence not be interpreted as a token of any ingratitude for your hospitality, but let your freedom and wealth make you not gloat over the adversity and

despondency of those who could also enjoy your life and peace."

When I drove him to his hotel, we were talking about the way each of us would like to die. He said that he had once had the same conversation with one of his American colleagues while he was in Cambridge. The American said he did not know anything about his own death. Stanislav answered that he knew how he, his American friend, would die. The other inquired how. Stanislav, in his own words, explained to him that he would die in a Soviet concentration camp. The American responded by saying that he was not going either to visit Russia or be imprisoned there. Stanislav remarked that he did not need to do that, for one day the Soviets will come to his country. Our car stopped at the Bedford Place and neither of us was in a hurry to say goodbye to the other. We took a stroll in the snow-decorated park and continued to talk. I asked him how he would prefer to die. "With a banner in my hands in the heat of battle, with my head towards my foe!" Stanislav exclaimed in reply. At the moment, he looked much younger. I recalled his war years and my favorite Prince Andrei Balkonsky, wounded in the battle with Napoleon. "Who will be your enemy?" I asked. "This is a secret", Stanislav echoed.

At that moment, I recalled that in our conversations he mentioned three books especially loved by him: *War and Peace* by Leon Tolstoy, *Master and Margarita* by Mikhail Bulgakov, and *Don Quixote* by Cervantes. It is difficult not to love Tolstoy's masterpiece, full of love and sunshine. Who will remain indifferent to the image of the half-crazy, but ever noble-minded Knight de la Mancha? But his love for the book written by Mikhail Bulgakov and buried in hideouts for at least a quarter of a century made me think even more. This was a story about the hopeless destiny of the abundantly gifted, nameless hero, following his female lover who has fallen so easily into the snares of the Devil's team. This story about a couple in the Soviet lunatic asylum can drive anybody into grief and despair. Why else did he love this masterpiece?

He was always sober and thoughtful, this new and strange short-timed friend of mine, who after a few days was to return to Moscow. He had told me enough about his various friends. He told me very little about his wife but it was clear that they were candid and devoted friends. Many years of suffering taught him how to control his feelings and thoughts. But as less hours remained for us to spend together, the more sincere he grew. When we once touched the subject of money, he remarked gloomily how meager was the wage he was paid by the Soviets while they were abroad and what a lion's share the Soviet Embassy in London would take even from this limited sum.

He also told a story about one stool-pigeon in his Department, whom his subordinates had recently caught red-handed while he was

switching on a tape-recorder in his briefcase during a meeting. Then he repeated his thought that the history of the Soviet Union had yet to be written. Probably he did not understand quite well, that to build a five or six member team in the West who would work on this project for five or six years was quite difficult. But he could not understand this and I was ashamed that we failed to build such a team here. On one of the last days together, we sat in my room listening to Alexander Galich's songs. One of them was the famous "Keep mum and you will become wealthy, you will become a boss, a hatchetman!" By that time, Galich had tragically died in Paris. Before his death he had sent us his last tape with tender words and his heart-rending song "When I return home...". During those minutes, it seemed to me that we were looking at the moment of that return from opposite directions. I had a sharp nostalgia for my motherland without willing to return instantaneously. He would readily have exchanged his fate for mine. It was in those minutes that he dropped the phrase that he saw in me a person chosen by Heaven. By that he simply meant how lucky I was.

On the evening before his departure, we were invited to the house of another colleague of mine. That colleague, B.J., spoke elegant Russian, was highly discrete and Stanislav felt very much at home in his company. I saw in him a rare ability to grasp immediately the character of those with whom he was acquainted. He did not see why he could not speak freely in the presence of B.J. While my wife was speaking with B.J. about some literary nuances, we stayed for several minutes in each other's company so that B.J. and my wife did not participate in our conversation. Now we began to talk about prison camps and his experiences there. He had no wish to impress me with his stories. It was actually not I who raised the topic. While he was talking about those years, his face hardened only slightly. One could bet that he had not left that morbid cage of soul-enslavement behind. We were touching the subject of "thieves and bitches" in prison camps. These "thieves and bitches" are the most unbelievable species of human beings one can find on our planet. I was caught off-guard by his stories but what he told me that evening could not be forgotten by me for many years. Although I studied the subject of "thieves and bitches" and wrote an article on them, his story was quite new to me. But more than the story itself, it was the tone, grief and epic style in which he communicated his experience of the prison-camp life in its tough, dry-eyed and utterly merciless facets.

In Stanislav's words, according to their law, the "thieves" were allowed to keep their girls (*vorovajki*), and these *vorovajki* could sleep with other prisoners in order to earn food or clothing for their masters. In prison jargon, this is called "to subf...". The thief who is served by such a *vorovajka* in this manner cannot have any complaints against

her. She brings him butter, bread, sugar, *etc.*, and she feeds her master who acts as a pimp. For such a *vorovajka*, her life will become different and unbearable, if she falls in love in all seriousness with anybody beyond the clan of the thieves. When this is disclosed, and in the prison-camp context one can hardly conceal anything, the *vorovajka* is subjected to a public punishment which might be one of three types. She is raped in public while she is laid on a spade which is swung up and down through its steep handle by a third person as the group of criminals observe the scene and exclaim that the girl cannot properly swing herself. The second type of rape-squad, which in Russian is usually called "streetcar" (*tramvaj*), consists in the girl being publicly raped anally after which she becomes a downtrodden outcast. But the worst type of punishment, if her former master flies into an outrage, consists of putting barbed wire in her genitals during the public punishment.

The next day Stanislav left, but before we met, he had been reading my book about post-Stalinist Russia which I published soon after my arrival in the West. I came to his hotel at two o'clock. While I was proceeding to his room, I caught the suspicious glance of a plain-clothesman which made me slightly uncomfortable. In Russia I was followed by some plainclothes civilians when I met foreigners; here I seemed to be followed when I meet my former countrymen. But this could be a product of my imagination as well.

When I entered his room, Stanislav was finishing reading. He did not have breakfast and forgot about lunch. The book described the events in the 1950's and the 1960's amidst our intelligentsia and at the top of the Soviet government. His keen eye could grasp a number of errors in the book for which I should be quite ashamed. Stanislav was a good scholar and he knew tiny details of Russian history. But I was pleased by his general reaction. This book had not been written by me in vain if years later it still exerted a deep impact on some Soviet people. But he could not take this book in his suitcase and returned it to me with his notes.

While parting, we embraced each other. I gave him a hundred pounds and he promised to return some money in rubles to our relatives in Moscow. We promised to love each other. Two days earlier, in the presence of my wife and myself, he said that he would tell everything to his wife. I had not asked him to pray for us, but he said that on the New Year night, the greatest holiday for Russians, just at twelve o'clock, he and his wife would toast us, if they are alone in the room, and they would silently think of our family, if they are in the company of others. Of course, their company consists mainly of Party members. I had asked him to convey to some of my executioners that I had no more grudges against them. By that time Gafurov had been already

buried in his Tadzhikistan.

With tears in my eyes I left his room. My meeting with this Party member created a tremendous upheaval in my feelings and thoughts. I was not sure what exactly he was doing in England and most probably he was in some capacity acting as a Soviet spy. Our meeting presupposed that I would never disclose to anybody, besides my wife, his real name and our conversations. Two or three times, while in Paris and Jerusalem, I asked my friends about him without saying anything concerning our meetings and the judgement of my friends was ruthless: "Fromkin is a scum." They brought out some facts about his behavior towards those who had been expelled from the Institute. Foolish as I was, I thought that I had discovered in Stanislav Fromkin some traits which would never change my mind about him. When I chance upon his articles in journals, I remember our conversations and with all my painful experience in life, I will be very much amazed if he damages in any way my family or myself. I have discovered in his personality a corner where few people have access. He might commit worse things; he serves the most abominable system that has ever existed in history; but still he remains a person with his own principles, with his own idea of respectable behavior. He commits villainies under pressure, but he differs from those many Party members who like mad dogs are ready to attack their innocent victims and seem to forget any idea of human compassion.

But for years his story about "thieves" and their "adulterous" *vorovajka*s pursued me both with the horrible scenes and my inability to understand why he told me that story. And only now, while I collect my thoughts about Stanislav, do I finally perceive his intention. After several days of conversation and that relative openness, which he had permitted himself in his trust to me, in his Aesopian metaphors, which had been apparent to all of us in his story about the Padishah, he gave me sufficient clues to understand the position of people like himself while they are at home in their country and abroad. These Soviet Party-carded scholarly visitors abroad are actually those criminal girls who by their prison-camp prostitution earn money for their highly placed and "aristocratic" pimps. They must return some earned money to the Soviet Embassy or to some other money-boxes. They can go to bed with non-thieves in order to earn money, butter and chocolate for their pimps, but they are not allowed to fall in love with their "customers" and betray their masters. They will be punished for the betrayal by such ruthless and sadistically ingenious tortures that all other "girls" will ponder dozens of times before they even think of breaking their "fidelity" to their masters.

The examples of Rostislav Uljanovskij and Stanislav Fromkin are only two from the numerous cases in which Party members have been

expelled from their organization and restored after a period of turmoil. As we have seen, for many people, the expulsion from the Party is a real tragedy which involves the deterioration and even the destruction of their whole life. Of course, there are special cases, like that of Grigorij Pomeranc, in which a person who had been expelled from the Party, after a period of imprisonment, did not think about re-entering it. His life was not sweet, but highly meaningful. But the presence of all these people in the Party leaves a trace in their personality even if they have no regrets about their staying beyond the Party. Those who are restored do not re-enter the land of milk and honey, either. Those who are sensitive and thoughtful feel that rejoining the Party is an act of perpetual enslavement and life-long moral prostitution.

Among the most splendid recent examples of a creative and living spirit among Russians is Lev Timofeev, the author of several essays including 'The Last Hope to Survive'[25] and the play 'Moscow - a Prayer about a Cup'.[26] These works could be considered as the highest point reached in the development of individual contemplation about Russia's present state of mind which has been embodied in a written form and reached us from inside the country. The original and highly courageous manner of his self-expression, his almost unprecedented ability to analyze the inner structure of the state's Party ideology and its impact on the people's mind with his present-day state of martyrdom, places him in the ranks of modern Russian thinkers who include Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov, Amalrik and Svetov.

Lev M. Timofeev was born in 1936 into a successful scientist's family. As of his youth he began his search for truth. In 1960 he graduated from the prestigious and government-sponsored Institute of External Trade. He was in the Soviet Army. In his late twenties and thirties as a Soviet journalist he published abundantly in *The Young Guard*, *The Soviet Woman* and *The Young Communist,* on whose editorial staff he worked full-time. He became a Party member candidate and in his late thirties he married for a second time. His wife is Natalja Eksler. While in his early forties, he underwent a serious crisis and became a Christian. He left his journal, *The Young Communist*, discontinued his association with the Communist Party, worked as a sailor, a salesman, and as a common worker. He also gave private lessons. He spent a good amount of his time in Zhelannoye, a village in the Kaluga region, where he worked together with the peasants, but it was there that he was working on his main essays: 'The Technology of the Black Market or the Peasants' Art of Starving'[27] and 'The Last Hope of Surviving'. His play 'Moscow - A Prayer about a Cup', published in 1985, is highly auto-biographical, deeply moving and shows the author's situation prior to his inevitable arrest by the KGB for his works published abroad.

In the past thirty and more years, there has been no shortage of courageous people who expressed their views and set a record in post-Stalinist history for self-expression and outspokenness. It is well-known that the regime does not leave a single case of outspokenness and opposition unpunished. These personalities were fired from their job, confined to mental hospitals, imprisoned, exiled to Siberia, killed or forced to leave Russia and go abroad. Timofeev knows about all these cases ("Solzhenitsyn has been deported, Sakharov exiled, Orlov imprisoned")[28], although he does not seem to have participated personally in the human-rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s and he, with noble sympathy and wisdom, qualifies this movement as belonging to the past.

Timofeev's example, in its spiritual, intellectual and tragic context, moves and inspires us from various angles. Having been a person who had all the chances to join the Party establishment, he left the path leading to his personal prosperity and security enjoyed so much by many thousands of his happy-go-lucky colleagues. A child of the moral protest movement after Stalin's death, Lev Timofeev knows intimately the various layers and aspects of Soviet life and expresses views so highly important for us in understanding that life. He is well aware of the price for his daring actions: his own arrest, many years of imprisonment and poverty for his wife and their two daughters, Sonja and Katja, if they had not been helped by conscientious and compassionate people.

Timofeev's views have been seriously influenced by Solzhenitsyn, especially by his 'To live not According to the Lie'. The official ideology is dead and it cannot overcome or eliminate the thousand-year experience of Russian life. He does not elaborate on what exactly this experience means. Timofeev's political philosophy sees many forms of personal resistance to the dictatorship of the Party's deadening ideology. The authorities will not improve the people's life. The authorities see their safest way of keeping the Soviet Empire's nations under control in creating an atmosphere of global threat of war which is highly dangerous in itself. However, despite their eagerness to conquer one country after another without jeopardizing their own future, the Soviet authorities will do their utmost to avoid a real global conflict, which might bury them. Timofeev expresses his total contempt towards Marxism-Leninism and various Soviet leaders, including Stalin, Brezhnev and Andropov, during whose short reign his important essay, 'The Last Hope to Survive', was written. But he rejects the idea of a new revolution because it will inevitably produce new cruelty and a new blood-thirsty dictatorship which will not be much better than the existing "system with her cannibalistic nature".[29] Timofeev's vision is openly and deeply Christian. His ability to use the

Bible's examples and phrases as metaphors is almost fantastic: "What then do we need? Not exactly the ear of the first priest's slave. Freedom, however, cannot be achieved by violence."[30] "To keep silent today means the same as to walk with truth in different directions. Truth is a social property and what is hidden today will be announced from the roofs tomorrow. We should speak."[31]

One cannot over-estimate Timofeev's recent works and their role in our efforts to perceive the nature of the Soviet society and its public opinion in our days. Each paragraph of his essay 'The Last Hope of Surviving' is brilliant.

> In newspapers, where the issue is the unity of the Party and the people ... it is said complacently and victoriously, that all of us, all(!) - serve one single IDEA, that each of us has been imprisoned by it. Is it so? Yes, it is so. We are obliged to serve. But we maintain that the dark force, having captured us physically, has squeezed spiritually no one among us, not a single one! We are imprisoned, but we are alive.[32]

Having made up his mind to let the Soviet authorities crucify him with his wife and children, again for no crime, just for a few words, Lev Timofeev expresses his reserved and at the same time boundless optimism:

> Perhaps, a word of truth, pronounced and being pronounced, will itself find the road to those waiting, to those searching for it. Let us hope for this. And the fact that the word is being awaited and searched for, that people want to perceive their own life in terms of sound reason, cannot be doubted. We see this around ourselves each hour. And if during the sixty-five years, social reason has been finding and is finding forms of resistance against the spiritual death threatening us, let us cherish hope for this mind to come in the future. Let us knock and it will be opened ... I do not predict the inevitable victory of morality and reason over radical madness in politics. What I say is only that social reason, public opinion and will, cannot be crushed. They will remain alive until the end, until the moment of mankind's physical destruction. And this means that until the moment of physical death, we shall preserve hope. We cannot hope for anything else.[33]

Can one believe that while millions of people on our continent have been victimized by their hedonistic passions so that they do not know where else to turn to be entertained and enlivened, in the wonderful country of "triumphant socialism" some of the best representatives of

our human race are awaiting their imprisonment and crucifixion for their love of truth and God, for their inherent inability to kill and to lie. Timofeev's auto-biographical 'Moscow - A Prayer about a Cup' is not only a reminiscence of Jesus' passion on Gethsemani. His bloody sweat is a repetition of Pasternak's prophetic request in *Doctor Zhivago*: "Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me." The play realistically reproduces the social environment of those Russian intellectuals who try their best to avoid spiritual death, no doubt by paying a high, but not always enviable price for remaining alive.

One need not be a prophet to foresee that for such essays and plays any Soviet man will be severely punished. However, in the crescendo of the developing movement which pursues the right to remain human and with God, Lev Timofeev has set a new record. He does not proclaim any appeal for a new revolution. He does not tend either to worship the Soviet leaders exaggeratedly or openly to despise them. He simply feels that he should express his mind, his thoughts and his feelings. He desires to say in public what millions of Soviet people say to each other in their houses. He has done his duty, for himself, for each of us. His wife, Natalja Eksner[34] remains alone with their two daughters, Sonja and Katja without any means, while her husband and their father, Lev Timofeev, has been arrested by the KGB (in March 1985). Timofeev failed to remain in the Party and he succeeded in coming to Christ.

No doubt, the authorities tried their best to break his will and change his personality as they managed with Lev Regelson, with Fr. Dmitrij Dudko and with hundreds of others. But their efforts came to naught and Lev Timofeev has now been released from prison. He is living in Moscow and continues to write and publish in *samizdat*, as member of the editorial board of the *Glasnost'* journal.

CHAPTER SIX

Women in the Party

Women in the Party constitute one of the most intriguing aspects of its activity. Future historians and sociologists will be able to interpret this frightening and simultaneously fascinating topic by accounting for the mentality of those females who belong to the Party.

The Party chronicles preserve the names of thousands and thousands of women who sacrificed their family happiness and life in general for the cause of the Party. In the first decades of the Communist Party's history, their heroism and spirit of self-sacrifice was nourished and strengthened by traditions, including those of the Russian Church as well as those of great Russian literature, where the image of dedication, fidelity and readiness to perish had been lauded by many authors, including Pushkin, Tolstoy and especially Turgenev. The images of Sofija Perovskaja, Vera Zasulich and Vera Figner are deeply imprinted in the minds of the women moulded by the Russian culture. They were ready to follow those they loved, to inspire them in a moment of weakness and despair, to climb up the scaffold without a word of complaint, to sit in prison for decades without giving up and to attempt to assassinate a police officer in revenge for their insulted brethren-in-spirit. Nadezhda Krupskaya was Lenin's wife and around her the aura of a motherly figure and of a great revolutionary was firmly established. Alexandra Kollontai and Inessa Armand were those Party women whose fiery temperaments and feminine charms used to inspire many people around them and in the world. Larissa Reisner, who died in 1928, played an enormous role during the Civil War and in the succeeding years.[1]

Both of Trotsky's wives were devoted to him until they breathed their last. Stalin's first wife, Ekaterina Svanidze, adored her Soso, and her death in 1907 was a real tragedy for Russia, for nothing else seemed to soften the heart of this man. The death of his second wife, Nadezhda Allilueva in 1932, was an even greater tragedy, after which the Prince of Darkness triumphed in the soul of this uncommon man. In the 1920's and 1930's, behind each great revolutionary leader and government official in Russia there stood their wives who paid the highest tribute for their husbands' activities or their own. Stalin imprisoned or executed the wives of his close associates, Molotov and Paskrebyšev. Women, expelled from the Party, went to prison and starved to death in the Northern or the Siberian prison camps. The female Party members, as we have seen in the case of Abakumov, were

tortured ruthlessly by the state security watchdogs. There is a lot of truth in M. Orlov's suggestion that the great trials in the 1930's were so successful for Stalin because the latter terrorized and blackmailed them by their wives and families.[2] Devoted to the memories of their dead and perished husbands, their wives carried through many decades the precious memories of Ioffe's suicide, Bukharin's *Testament* and Trotsky's death. Stalin's only daughter, a Party member herself, was able to enter the Russian Orthodox Church[3], write revealing memoirs about her father and his Kremlin environment and smuggle them with herself when she escaped to the West in 1967 on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

Until the tragedies of the mid-1930's, women generally played a secondary role in the Party. But they were present in it, participated in its actions, and in government jobs. But since that time, the Party women began playing less and less important roles at the upper and higher-middle level of the Party and the government institutions. Prior to her death, Nadezhda Krupskaya was said not to have been allowed even to answer telephone calls[4] directly and as Lenin's widow she was utterly helpless amidst those bloody dramas which were sweeping over Russia. More than anyone else, the Party women and the Party members' wives, mothers and daughters could know with their own blood and sufferings what all that wonderful experience in building socialism meant. Their husbands, sons and fathers disappeared and those who did not follow them (these also were counted by hundreds of thousands) experienced the hell of torture, repression, visiting the prisons' gates, sending parcels and money from their shrinking resources. Although Stalin was always an excellent actor and since the early 1930's displayed for many years an exaggerated and artificial public attention to the emancipation of women, he himself lived essentially in the very heart of the den of thieves where women did not play any decisive role at all. On the other hand women were widely used, exploited, seduced and raped, as happened in the case of Lavrentij Berija, and this was naturally spread among the people despite all the barriers, censorship and repressions. The evil role of the state security police remained a secret for only those who stuffed their ears and closed their eyes in the face of facts. Women's refined and more delicate nature equipped them in a better way with the ability to perceive the criminal spirit of the Party behind its show-off façade. Young ladies could participate in an even-handed way with boys and young men in the Young Communist League work, but as of the mid-1930's, there was a definite trend among female grown-ups to stay away from the Party ranks.

The common Russian language invented colorful words for defining those who were Party members. The words like *partijnij*, *partijec*,

parteinij could neutrally denote a Party member, sometimes even with a shade of respect or mockery depending on the milieu of the speaker. Quite often among critical-minded people one can find neologisms like *partsvoloč'*, *partnegodiaj* or *partmerzavec*, which can be translated as "a Party son of a bitch", "a Party villain" or "a Party scoundrel". But the language itself added a great deal of pejorative semantics to words such as *bolševička*, *partijnaja*, *partejnaja*, *partženščina* or *parttetka*, correspondingly translated by "a Bolshevik lady", "a Party woman", "a Party broad", "a Party aunty". Quite often *partsuka* and *partsučka* are used also ("a Party bitch" and its diminutive form). In general, people have a negative attitude towards female Party members and the reasons for this should be properly understood.

I will now describe a Party family which I had a good chance to observe during many years of my life as a family of my closest friend. The mother-in-law of my closest friend is a Party woman. Her mother, who died in 1963 at the age of 76 had been a Party member since 1924, the year of Lenin's death. The mother-in-law of my friend, Ksenija Ivanovna, is now almost seventy-five years old and her brother Stepan, two years older than his sister, had joined the Communist Party in the 1930's.

A close and intimate friend of mine, Vadim, fell in love with Svetlana and in the early 1960's they were planning to marry. Like myself, Vadim was an orientalist and Svetlana - a charming young lady who studied one of the Indian languages. Vadim was seven years older than her and, despite his entangled past and failure in his first marriage, their love for one another reminded me of Romeo and Juliet, the only difference being that their romance took place in Communist Moscow and not in medieval Verona. Under no conditions would Vadim have applied for Party membership. He was Jewish with strong Christian leanings and, of course, quite anti-Soviet. Svetlana shared his views entirely and it was absolutely clear that they could not live without each other.

Svetlana lived with her mother, but loved her *babushka* more than herself, more than anybody in her life. When she brought Vadim to her *babushka*, who lived in the suburbs of Moscow, they loved each other from the very first moment. By that time she was in her early seventies, lean and clean, very clever and kind, rather poor and undemanding but illiterate and religious, and as it appeared slightly later, she was also a Party member since the year of the great Soviet leader's demise.

Svetlana's *babushka* had been born in a poor Russian peasant family. She married a man of her own class and before World War One she bore three children: Ksenija, Stepan and Grigorij. Her husband was killed during the war and with the three little children she moved to

Moscow, where she began working at a shoe-making factory. At no time did she attend any school and could not even sign her name. She was enormously industrious. God knows she agreed to join the Communist Party when Lenin died, but at least one hundred thousand people entered the Party at that time. One cannot say that her Party membership had changed her life in any distinctive way but she had a secure job, some kind of financial support from the factory and, naturally, some participation in the factory workers' administration. As a representative of the working class, she was regularly elected to various workers' committees. Strangely enough, throughout the 1920's and the 1930's, she never gave up her religion although she refrained from publicizing it.

As a workers' representative, she was sent to various meetings and once in 1937 she happened to sit in the presidium of an important meeting where slightly to the right of her and in the center of the meeting, Stalin himself was sitting. As illiterate as she was, without adequate understanding of what was going on in the country, she looked a couple of times at this person, so adored by many, and felt sick; she could hardly refrain from vomitting in front of the gathering, two steps to the left from the Father and the Teacher of the Great Soviet people.

In no less a way did she hate Lavrentij Berija, the notorious head of the state security under Stalin. While Stalin was alive, she never mentioned him in the presence of her grand-daughter otherwise but as "a pock-marked devil", while everytime she saw Berija in the newspapers, she turned her face from his portrait in disgust and made a common gesture with her thumb which indicates how a louse should be squeezed to death. In the 1930's, she could see that a number of Party members were arrested, including their director Fedor Jasnij. Fedor Jasnij had been loved by her and by many other workers for years and Svetlana's *babushka*, Avdotja, never left the family of Jasnij while he was interrogated and imprisoned. After he was released from prison, the picture of his tortures became more clear. Fedor Jasnij was brutally beaten. Needles were driven under his nails which had been torn off entirely after that. The interrogators inserted a bottle into his rectum and mutilated him by twisting his testicles and smashing his kidneys. Fedor Jasnij, an old Party member, did not sign anything, but he was turned into a cripple and died soon after his release. This story totally killed her faith in Stalin and she regretted that she was a Party member though at that time there was no way to quit it.

When Hitler's troops were approaching Moscow, she burnt her Party card. At that time, she understood a little bit better how the common Russians treated Party members. One of her neighbors, a squint-eyed and moustached old woman, told her that when the

Germans come to Moscow, they will be informed about who had joined the Communist Party and the Party-card holders will be hanged at the gallows. But the Germans never entered Moscow. Avdotja was returned her Party-card without much fuss, but she did not even think about informing the authorities about the threats of her squint-eyed neighbor. She always taught Svetlana that she should never denounce anyone to the authorities.

Two of her children, Ksenija and Stepan, grew up, married and five of her grandchildren were born throughout the 1930's. Stepan also joined the Party and after that was recruited by the state security. Ksenija was married to an extremely nice and good-looking person, Michail, and they had a boy, Nikolaj and the girl, Svetlana. Ksenija's husband did not want to join the Party. Being from an educated Jewish family, Michail, who worked as a physician, repeated that it was better to remain "a non-Party Bolshevik". *Babushka* Avdotja adored Michail and her two grandchildren, Kolja and Svetocka. At the very beginning of the war, Michail left for the front and was soon lost, traceless, in the great disaster of the war. At that time, Ksenija was already in the mountains of Central Asia with her two little children. The news about her husband's loss had a disastrous impact on Ksenija. Michail had loved his children and while leaving for the army he could not tear himself from his three-year-old Svetočka who was in the hospital. Again and again he returned to the ward to kiss her goodbye. He asked Ksenija to take Sveta home; Ksenija did so and in three days the children's hospital was bombed to ashes by one of the first German bombings. The tragic news came during the first days of their stay in the Central Asian Kirgizia; Ksenija was paralyzed and hospitalized while both of the little children found themselves homeless on the street and were picked up by a compassionate Russian woman. There was a day or two when Ksenija was considered dead.

Babushka Avdotja lived in Moscow and spent her last kopek in order to send parcels to her daughter and grandchildren. Her older son Stepan was in the war and reached the rank of Colonel. Her second son Grigorij was also in the war but remained a soldier. By the end of the war, Ksenija returned to Moscow with her children. *Babushka* made up her mind to quit her job and dedicate herself to her grandchildren, Kolja and Sveta. Both Stepan and Grigorij came back from the war alive and both of them could not live a single day without drinking. However, Stepan earned good money until he retired from the army, while Grigorij kept on drinking until he decided to simulate a theft and landed in a Siberian prison-camp.

The post-war years were enormously painful and full of deprivations. Ksenija continued to work as a physician, but she was almost unable to feed her family. Within the circle of her family, she

began discussing the question whether she should join the Communist Party. Both *babushka* and Stepan were Party members and advised Ksenija to follow their example - with all the pros and cons: Party members were paid better and were provided with various privileges, *etc.* Who could have given good advice to Ksenija, who was in her mid-thirties and still quite attractive? Too many worries fell upon her head. She smelled the scent of approaching anti-Semitism and was frightened to death because her late husband was Jewish and her children had a Jewish last name. Her son, Nikolaj, was going to a military school. Sveta, her great joy, was a very good schoolgirl, enormously gifted in music and drawing, ballet and languages, but she suffered from tuberculosis, a disease which at some stage of her childhood could have been fatal. Their living conditions were awful; the walls of the flat were all wet.

Ksenija became a Party member in the late 1940's and was soon after invited to join the state security forces. Once again she shed tears and sobbed in the circle of the family, but Stepan, who was rarely sober by this time, recommended that she accept the offer, for he knew for sure that in this way she would be paid two or three times better than in her civilian job. Her mother, Avdotja, understood things much better and she would gladly have dissuaded her daughter from joining the state security; what could the young widow with her two children do alone, without a husband? Ksenija was good and honest, but she was never highly intelligent. She had graduated from the Medical University and had hardly read a single book about anything beyond her field which dealt with sanitary conditions and health food. She decided to accept the offer and joined the state security. Her job was to inspect the food of Vjačeslav Molotov; each great leader of the Soviet Union had a team of persons who inspected their food from morning till night lest it might be poisoned by the enemies of the people. She was happy that she had been trusted with such a responsible job.

She was always honest before the Party and did not disguise that her late husband was Jewish. However, her son, Nikolaj, was going to enter the military school and after that the Academy and she thought that it would be better for him to bear her maiden name. Sveta retained the surname of her late father. Life together with *babushka* grew more and more strained. *Babushka* was very impatient with her daughter and constantly scolded her for everything she did. Ksenija could not buy a summer dress or underwear without being reprimanded by her mother. *Babushka* had reasons to be angry about such things with her children, Ksenija and Stepan. Her younger son, Grigorij, languished in a Siberian prison-camp, but his Party-membered brother and sister had rejected any ties with him and never mentioned his name during their family gatherings. They had made their verdict long ago: Grigorij had

no wish to give up his drinking habits and the vodka had ruined him. Now they did not want him to ruin their careers and their Party future. *Babushka* could never forgive their wickedness towards their younger brother. By this time she could read her Sveta's fairy tales and the story about Ivanuška the Fool, who had been harassed and killed by his elder brothers, used to torment her own mind. Without saying a word to anybody except little Sveta, she went every two months with her little daughter to a suburban town, Mytišči, from where she could send a parcel to her son, starving in his Siberia. Essentially illiterate, she asked her teenage granddaughter to write Grigorij's address on each parcel and this was still easier and less troublesome than to have asked anybody else around to have helped her own grown-up child in far-away Siberian exile, alone among alien people.

The Party-carded *babushka* and her daughter lived in the same room in a communal apartment. From some of their neighbors, they had to disguise the fact that they were Party members. Ksenija's job was filled with unexpected dangers. Once Molotov saw a strange foam in his cup of tea, and Ksenija was arrested since there was a grave suspicion that she had intended to poison this great Party leader of Russia. *Babushka* and her grandaughter spent two nights and two days in nervous fever until their daughter and mother happily returned. By long evenings, *babushka* and her daughter Ksenija were whispering to each other many things which were not audible to Svetlana, but *babushka* used to blame the Party leaders for almost everything, while her daughter asked her to keep mum, saying that she would ruin the whole family.

On the day of Stalin's death, March 5, 1953, her tiny apartment looked like a scene from a great world tragedy. Ksenija kept on weeping and sobbing, while her mother, the old Party member, crossed herself many times, whispering the words "Glory to thee, God, this pock-marked devil has kicked the bucket!" Time and again the *babushka* asked her hysteria-ridden daughter to stop weeping. Her fifteen-year-old granddaughter did not know whom to believe. On the one hand, she herself had been brought up worshipping Stalin and could not mistrust her mother who was an honest Party member. On the other hand, some of her schoolmates were full of joy on that day because of Stalin's demise and she was also very fond of her grandma. Ksenija was afraid for the security of their family, but even more than that, she was frightened that her beloved daughter Svetočka, would be so badly influenced by *babushka* who did not understand many modern and contemporary attitudes, and as a backward element, remained under the spell of religion, that opium of the masses and the soul of a soulless world. With all that, Ksenija understood more and more that something was wrong with Communism-building. Her neighbors in their com-

munal aparment were not prepared to finalize that Communist edifice. With all the stealing and drunkenness swarming over the country, it would be absolutely incredible if the Communism would be built in the time span solemnly proclaimed by the Party leaders. Her neighbor in the apartment, who also worked in the KGB, was himself engaged in stealing a great number of tiny bottles with spirits from his drugstore. Her other neighbor worked as the boss of those black vans in which the state security agents transported those who were arrested and sentenced to prisons. His wife was such a busybody that nothing could be said in her presence. Ksenija's daughter graduated from high school with a gold medal, but she had to turn every stone in order to have her daughter be accepted by Moscow State University and, if some good people would not have become indignant at this case of injustice and rung up the office of the Soviet President himself, this brilliant student and daughter of the war's victim would have had no chance to be accepted as a student there.

Her attempts to criticize her bosses at the KGB had a strange and unpleasant impact on her career and promotion. She was not given what she was supposed to receive. Several times her bosses let her know perfectly clearly that if she would not agree to go to bed with them, she had to abandon any idea not only about further promotion, but even about remaining in the network of the KGB. And she was really worried that one day the soup or beef stew that she was obliged to check in order to guarantee the safety of Vjačeslav Molotov might not be fresh enough or be really poisoned, on account of which she would land in prison and her fatherless daughter would become motherless overnight. She was forced to leave the KGB and it was not at all easy for her to find another job because everywhere people were very afraid of those who had worked with the KGB.

The favorite topic of conversation between Ksenija and her brother Stepan touched on the same subject: will Communism be built in the country or not. This subject was thrashed out again and again at each family meeting around the table, served by Stepan who felt excited and jubilant that at least on these solemn occasions he was not rebuked for raising his glass with its healing liquid. Between the sister and the brother, there was no disagreement: they were sure that they would not be able to see Communism with their own eyes. Their endless arguing touched on other minor details: whether Communism would be built at least during the life of their children or grandchildren, for whom they had sacrificed their lives. Having drunk a little, Stepan fought to prove that Communism would not be built even in the life of their grandchildren, and while Ksenija did not disagree with that essentially, she became angry that he mentioned their grandchildren and not children. By saying that even the grandchildren would not see Communism,

Stepan deprived her of the last hope and she blamed him for being influenced fatally by alcohol. If the possibility of building socialism appeared so unconsoling, at least they could search for the proper reasons why their enthusiasm and hopes were so frustrated. Ksenija proved that people were stealing too much, but what was much worse, they were eating abundantly while the country's food reserves were insufficient. *Babushka* was listening to them, thought about her son Grigorij, and exclaimed from time to time: "Oh God, what fools I have produced into this world!"

Sveta grew up and fell in love with Vadim. Their love was real, but *babushka* and Ksenija reacted very differently to this love which led to a marriage at the end of 1960. Vadim was not going to join the Communist Party and by the time of his acquaintance with Sveta he became deeply religious. He really loved Sveta, but he hardly knew how he would adapt to the society which drove him almost crazy. The only possible solution for him was to continue his previous studies, although his real vocation lay in the field of literature and religious strivings.

Babushka greeted Vadim as her own dear grandson. She welcomed him, fed him, knitted for him woolen socks and baked pies with meat and cabbage. The tiny porch where she lived throughout the whole year became his own home at least for the weekends during which *babushka*, Sveta and Vadim talked about religion and politics, everyday life and relatives. They celebrated the Christian festivals and, with Vadim, *babushka* used to forget that she had been a Party member.

For Ksenija, her daughter's love for Vadim developed as a real tragedy. She was more than scared; she was almost killed by their love. Before Sveta and Vadim married, she tried many times to warn her daughter that persons with Vadim's face and character had been usually seen by her in the Lefortovo prison, where she had been inspecting the food of prisoners, in accordance with her commitments in the KGB. She quarrelled with the *babushka*, saying that *babushka*'s tender love for Vadim was dangerous and when she was asked by her mother to state her reasons for this, she said that Vadim was older than Sveta, although her main worry was focused on the fact the Vadim was Jewish. At once, *babushka* replied that Ksenija's own first love, (at that time people were not officially married) was much older than her, and that Ksenija's husband and the father of her children was Jewish as well. Ksenija tried to convince her mother that in the 1930's being Jewish was not so dangerous as now, but her mother, a Russian-born peasant, did not want to listen. She loved Jews, she was fond of Ksenija's Jewish husband and Vadim looked exactly like Sveta's father. Ksenija had not read any books, but she could guess that the love affair of her daughter reminded her of a classical romance in which

a daughter of a prison chief fell in love with a handsome and intelligent prisoner and the prison's boss was helpless to prevent them from marrying each other.

Her maternal heart whispered to her that she could expect nothing auspicious from their marriage. For a while, Sveta and Vadim lived in her room and survived. For Vadim, life with her in the same room for more than two years was simply hell. But what could he do? He was working on his thesis and their weekends were spent on *babushka*'s porch. Ksenija was the head of the Party organization in her clinic. She read the newspapers and regretted that Stalin had been criticized. Vadim could again understand the meaning of "Partlady". Several times she had to prepare her report for the Party organization, but without Sveta's help she was unable to do anything. Sveta asked Vadim to help her mother write her Party report. On the basis of Ksenija's remarks, Vadim dictated the report and Sveta retyped it. His mother-in-law was struck dumb. He dictated the report so quickly and flawlessly, in such a good language and with the proper Party approach! Then she said to Sveta, hinting at his otherwise wrong views and words: "You see, he can also do in the manner required here!" When Vadim told the story to *babushka*, she laughed hard. After their first son Michail was born, they moved to their own apartment which they bought with their own money. Vadim and Sveta submitted their PhD theses and they earned better money. But Vadim's thoughts never changed and his influence on Sveta, as she saw it, was disastrous. They were very much against Stalin and although at that time, Khrushchev himself was speaking and acting against Stalin's posthumous cult, she believed that the Party's leadership was wrong to overthrow their faith in Stalin.

She could not believe that such persons as her son-in-law could thrive under the Soviet system. Many years of her life had convinced her that people with these faces dwelt mainly in Lefortovo and prison camps. With fright she saw that the best friends of her children, Sveta and Vadim, were of the same type: Jewish and with typical Soviet prisoners' faces. They were nice and intelligent people, but in their presence she felt herself a blockhead. They talked about the arts and literature, they listened to the wrong songs and a great deal of what passed in their converstatons she did not understand at all.

In 1963, the *babushka* died and Ksenija was sitting at her deathbed for many weeks. Because she was blocked from her religious friends, *babushka* spent her last days without having any access to the religious sacraments through her intermediaries. But before her death, *babushka* was reconciled with her daughter. When *babushka* died, whispering the name of her son, Grigorij, all kinds of old women connected with the church obtained a full access to her body and her children did not interfere. Ksenija saw that Vadim was reading the New Testament

through the whole night over the coffin of her mother, but she did not prevent him from doing this. The whole family liked it. She herself recalled those happy years from her youth when she was very religious and wanted to baptize the first son of her brother, Stepan. After *babushka* was buried, there was a clash concerning the monument over *babushka*'s grave. Stepan wanted to engrave a five-pointed star on the grave-stone, while Vadim said that there should be a cross. For Ksenija it was all the same. She knew many Party members whose old parents were very religious. The argument ended by engraving neither a cross nor a star on her monument.

Soon Sveta bore another son who was called Grigorij. Thus one of her grandsons reminded her of her own missing husband, while another reminded her of her own brother who at the hour of her mother's death was writing his last letter to her.

In 1968, Vadim was expelled from his job for his outspokenness. But Ksenija knew nothing about this during those months. For the next four years, her daughter's house was uncommon and full of nervous tension. It was frequented by all those people whose real place she had been brought up to think lay in the prisons but, by that time, she liked these people and found them less and less strange. She could now even live with her son-in-law, but her daughter, in the Spring of 1972, announced to her that for all these years her husband had been blacklisted and under the threat of arrest every day. They had no other exit but to apply for emigration.

For Ksenija, who was by that time in her mid-sixties, this was a major blow. She was not convinced that they would be allowed to leave the country and if they would be allowed, she could not follow them because of her other son. The days her child and grandsons left for the West were spent in tears and heart-rending grief.

Since that day, she was not able to regain her normal feelings. Since that day, when she saw her children and grandchildren at the airport, more than twelve years have passed. Now Ksenija is in her mid-seventies and she is still a Party member. Her life is a tragedy. Her son is in Central Asia. Her daughter lives in Eastern America. There is no hope for her to see her daughter or grandchildren who cannot properly write Russian now, while she is unable to understand their English letters. Recently, when she had to exchange her Party card, she was afraid that she would be expelled from the Party. If her children and grandchildren were now labelled "enemies of the people", they could also consider her to be an "enemy of the people". God knows what has happened during all these years to her, her mind, her soul! She had given up her whole life for the sake of the Soviet people and the Communism they were building. But now she is confused and understands nothing. In her old age all her friends are the friends of

Sveta and Vadim. She visits them every week or so. Sometimes they come to see her and help her - especially now, when she has a separate apartment which she has bought thanks to her daughter's help. These friends of her children are so good and kind. They do not forget her. And she has changed a lot of her thoughts. She does not think any longer that Vadim and his friends should sit in prison and in prison camps. Something is wrong with the system if these intelligent and generous people have no other choice but to be blacklisted, incarcerated or emigrate. Thanks to God, they were able to emigrate, for she cannot imagine her daughter visiting the prison camp, where Vadim is confined and she does not want to see her grandsons as orphans. Let them grow up there as good people.

She perceives now that more often than not she has been nasty and unbearable to her daughter, her husband and their friends. She cannot overcome her feelings of anger and irritation toward her son-in-law. He has stolen her daughter and he has driven away her children. But she no longer says, as she did initially, that she would rather see them dead than abroad. No, No! Let them live there. They have a house there. The sons attend college. They look so handsome in the photographs. But why did they not take her with them? She cannot live without her daughter who is her heart, her soul. Each time she goes to the post-office to receive her letter, she rejoices and triumphs. Her little, charming Svetočka! She loves her daughter so much and so many times she was angry with her, her son-in-law, their friends. She knows that Vadim expressed his thoughts and stated the truth, but why could he not have kept silent like the others? However, she herself taught her daughter to be honest and she, Ksenija, had suffered a lot for speaking the truth. For having announced the truth she had been fired from the KGB, while for stating the truth her son-in-law was punished by the same KGB and lost his job. Now, when she is sitting among the friends of Vadim and Sveta, listening to their discussions, she is not infrequently irritated by them. These friends are not afraid of her any longer. She is the mother of their close friends. Even with her Party card she will not denounce them. But it is funny and frightening when she exclaims to them during these discussions: "My children have suffered for having spoken the truth in public while you are sitting around the table in your cozy and nicely furnished apartments and criticize our shortcomings with your tongue in cheek. Why don't you say what you think in public?" No, now she would not even say this.

Many of their friends have also been fired from their jobs, even though they were prominent scientists, scholars and writers. So many of them left their country for Israel and America and she cannot visit them any longer. Some of them were imprisoned and recently there has been a home search in the apartments of those whom she often visits.

They could have come at a moment when she was sitting among them. And even after that she wants them to visit her and she visits the friends of their children. Earlier she said "we" when she was talking about the KGB. Now she can talk about this organization in terms of "them". She cannot even speak about the Party using that well-known "we". She is pretty sure that Communism will not be built even for her great-great-grandchildren. Nor does she argue with Stepan any more about all that. She visits her brother from time to time. But she prefers to go to her children's friends. She likes to listen to their conversation. And she is fond of meeting those foreigners who occasionally come with presents and pictures from their children. These American students and teachers are so nice, polite and cultured. She has been ever dreaming about beauty in nature and human beings. What a paradox that she does not see that beauty in the state or the Party which she has been serving for so many years, but rather in those whom she had been taught to despise and harass. Something has gone wrong in her life and in the life of her late mother. She visits the grave of her mother which she had attended so often with her beloved daughter. She looks at the portrait of her mother on the grave-stone and wonders whether Vadim was right to oppose Stepan's intention to engrave a five-pointed star. She would have been uncomfortable and uneasy to see in all those intimate moments between her mother and her children anything that would remind her too strongly of the Party to which she still belongs. But she thinks about this Party less and less.

Obviously, Party membership influences the character of each person, but the characters of women are touched or damaged even more crucially by their participation in the Party. All kinds of stories are told about Ekaterina Furtseva who had been elected to the Politburo in 1957 through the assistance of her friend, Nikita Khrushchev. Her unsettled family life with her husband who was a diplomat for many years in Belgrad, her numerous lovers, the scandals concerning financial corruption in the 1970's and her mysterious death after repeated threats that she would take her life - all these stories testify that her life was far from being happy.[5]

She was said to have drunk heavily. However, various sources confirm the view that she was not the worst in the frightening cohort of high Soviet Party officials. Among her good deeds one should not forget that in the heat of Khrushchev's struggle with the Stalinists in 1957, her help to Khrushchev was indispensable.

In a famous song by A. Galich, 'The Red Triangle', we see a Party lady and a trade-union boss, Comrade Paramonova. With all her wealth and honor, her life cannot arouse envy. Her husband is an empty-headed Party guy who does not waste time when he wants to chase after girls while she is in Moscow and especially when she is

abroad. After she returns to Moscow from her important foreign trip, she receives an anonymous letter informing her of her husband's recent amorous adventures and a photo showing him with his current lover. She leaves him alone in their apartment and decides to take him to task at a Party meeting for his misdeeds. She is stupid enough to wash her dirty linen in public, but is still sensitive enough to turn black from anger, red from shame and pale after the meeting for fear that her adulterous husband, so attractive to women, might ultimately leave her. Deprived of charms to captivate her husband, she uses the Party organization to reprimand him and their reconciliation finally takes place in the office of a high Party secretary.[6]

The comic song saddens the listener because eventually he feels that the fragile nature of a lady has been crushed by her Party membership. She seems to have lost her orientation and has blinded herself by her Party membership.

A striking example of this self-mutilation and self-blinding is given by N. Janevič in her brief history of the Moscow World Literature Institute.

In 1977 died Irina Grigotevna Neupokoeva, a leading Party figure in the World Literature Institute and a person with a tragic fate. Her father, Grigorij F. Grin'ko, was a prominent Ukrainian statesman and in his last years he was the Finance Minister of the USSR. In 1937 he was arrested and his daughter, Irina, was at that time a young Communist League member and a student in the famous IFLI, the Moscow Institute of Philosophy, Literature and Arts. At a Komsomol meeting in her Institute, where the students were informed about the "criminal" activities of her father, G.F. Grin'ko, she voted together with the other students for the most severe sentence for her father: execution.[7] This action by young Irina was said to shock even the Young Communist League activists who were rarely embarrassed by any event in those frightening times.

Her father was brutally tortured and executed in the KGB cellars while his daughter exhibited no pain and held out to the last in order to establish herself in the society which had ruined her family and killed her father. After Nikita Khrushchev's report about Stalin's crimes, she was allowed to return to Moscow, joined the Communist Party, wrote her Candidate and Doctorate theses in literature and continued to climb up the ladder of success and social honor.

In the first period of her work at the Moscow World Literature Institute, her Party colleagues were debating the case of Abel I. Starcev, who had been imprisoned in 1949 for no reason at all and after being released six years later, sought to return to the same Institute from which he had been expelled because of his arrest. Roman Samarin, who was responsible for Starcev's imprisonment, had personal reasons

to oppose the appointment of this scholar in the Department he headed. Facing strong opposition from his Party colleagues, the non-Party member Roman Samarin kept on bringing up the argument of presupposing the "criminality" of Abel Starcev, who had been released from prison with his indictment entirely erased. It is more than probable that Roman Samarin was informed about the past of Abel Starcev by unknown and knowledgeable officials through the state security channels. When, at the last and critical stage, a group of Party members made their last attempts to restore Abel Starcev to the Institute, a member of the Party bureau, Irina Neupokoeva, delivered her speech. Oblivious to her own father's tragic fate, she opened the box of Party-nonsense-demagoguery and discoursed about the need to spare the feelings of those who have been entrusted with the administration of the Institute. Stating that Party members could only recommend actions to the Institute's administration, but not force it to commit any of these actions, she mentioned that in the case of Starcev there could be concealed some higher considerations unknown to the present members of the Party bureau. Her shrewd speech put an end to Starcev's attempts to return to the research Institute.

Irina Neupokoeva, in Janević's words, was smart, shrewd and selfish. Step by step, she built her career and became one of the most responsible figures in the World Literature Institute. She wrote numerous articles and books in the literary field which had a rather scholarly appearance. She was an efficient administrator who chaired important conferences and sessions. In critical situations, she supported the administration of the Institute. She was a good actress: if necessary, she was mild and polite; in other cases, she was hypocritical or rigid as iron. In the last years of her life she was appointed to be the head of the Scholarly Council in her Institute and, of course, she was always elected as a member of the Institute Party Bureau. She was regularly sent abroad and her family, *i.e.*, husband and children, could serve as a good example of what a Soviet family should be like.

Then, in a short time, as if in retribution for her evil life, the whole edifice of her professional achievements and family ideals fell apart. An incurable disease afflicted her and this time she did not know how to cope with it. Her physical sufferings were enormous, but far more painful was her helplessness in dealing with the pain and approaching death. This pain removed all the hypocritical masks from this unhappy woman. Her inner self was disclosed and she threw all her boundless hatred and wrath upon her physicians and nurses, upon her own husband and those who were going to survive her. Having tortured many people around herself, she died in pain.

Immediately after her death, a tragedy took place. Her husband married another woman - it appeared that he had been just waiting for

the death of his wife whom he had been pretending to love. But his son, in hatred for his father and his new wife, brutally killed her. At the trial, the father demanded that his own son be sentenced to death. The terrifying cycle which began with the daughter of G. Grin'ko, who had voted for her father's death and rejected his family name, culminated in further intrafamily murders. The Communist Party appeared unable to provide its members with an appropriate ethical code of behavior.

She was an intelligent, knowledgeable lady, this Irina Grigorevna Neupokoeva, daughter of a slain Soviet statesman. She understood many mysteries of life. Most probably, since the years of her youth, she was recruited by the state security to inform them about what other people said about the Soviet system and, for a while, she was proud of the Party's trust in her, the daughter of an executed enemy of the people. She struggled for her success in life. Her will was extraordinarily strong; her patience was inexhaustible. She had been serving the system that had killed her father and destroyed her early family happiness. She had joined those who had stabbed her father and she was not a fool oblivious to the fact that ancient Greeks warned those daughters who did not want to bring their tributes to the graves of their fathers. She knew quite well about the other commandments inherited by the law-givers of our civilization. Irina Neupokoeva, who had chosen such a significant name ("She who had not been mourned by the funeral rites"), was not a tyrant to her family, not a sadist towards her husband, who seemed to swindle her by his obedient and enviable love. This unhappy lady with her incurable disease and months of agonizing pain is the symbol of the unhealed *Weltschmerz* and soul-aching which she had carried throughout her adult life.

A good number of female Party members whom I observed throughout my life make me think that quite frequently the Party membership failed to exterminate the most precious part of their character, their human and motherly compassion. At the time of World War Two, while I, an eleven-year-old boy, was far away from my mother amongst the Ural mountains, I experienced the love of my teacher and educator Roza Davydovna Syndalovskaja. My life would have swerved to other, much more unpleasant roads, if this childless, forty-year-old lady did not take care of me with sentiments I am not entitled to forget.

Grigorij Svirskij told me many times, that after he had been expelled from the Communist Party and turned into a social leper in the Soviet Union, Valentina Grizodubova, was never afraid to help him and offered him moral support which cannot be properly measured.[8]

Ljudmila Alekseeva became and still remains one of the corner-stones of the human-rights movement. Beginning in 1967 and until

now, without self-pity and complaints, she dedicates herself to the cause of the humiliated and the hurt.[9] A lady who will not be forgotten in literary chronicles is Frida Vigdorova. I saw her in Leonid Pinskij's apartment at the end of 1964, at an evening of songs sung by Alexander Galich. More than thirty persons were present in a relatively small room and Frida Vigdorova, a black-eyed and dark-haired woman in her mid-forties, was sitting modestly to my right while we were facing Alexander Galich as he sat at the opposite side of the table, close to the door. By that time, I had already read her account of Joseph Brodsky's trial and I could not help looking at her face without feelings of awe. She knew that her presence was noticed by almost all who were present there. There was nothing extraordinary in her face, nothing very beautiful or heroic. Somebody whispered to me that she was very sick. She looked around herself. Her eyes met the eyes of Alexander Galich and bowed politely and he gently smiled to her as he was warming himself up for singing his incredible songs. But Frida's eyes were so impassive that I could read in them her courage and the satisfaction that she was known to the Moscow intelligentsia. There was also a great sadness on her face. I could not have known that less than eight months remained for her to live.

Raisa Orlova kept up a friendship with Frida Vigdorova for a quarter of a century and her notes about Frida are important for a better understanding of this lady.[10] Her transformation can amaze and teach us at the same time. In the 1940's, she wrote highly patriotic and ideologically impeccable books. One, for instance, was about Zoja Kosmodemjanskaja, a saintly Soviet teenager hanged by the Germans during the first year of their war with Russia.

The life-history of Frida Vigdorova is an eye-opening tale which leads one "from non-knowledge to knowledge, from faith to doubting, from naiveté to bitter sobriety". She was a person of integrity. When her beloved teacher, Anna Ivanovna, was exiled, Frida went with her into exile. When her friend, Ruth Zernova, was arrested with her husband, Frida took her daughter and practically adopted her. The events of 1937 struck her and made her think.

Until her death, she was friendly with Lidija Čukovskaja and helped Kornej Čukovskij handle "The Trust of Good Actions" or "Tiny Miracles". She helped people in trouble. When in 1949, a notorious campaign was launched to expel "cosmopolitans", Frida was very much against the mob psychosis. In 1961, she organized a campaign to release Irina Emelanova, who had been arrested and jailed in connection with the case of Boris Pasternak. Frida was among the first to be acquainted with Evgenija Ginzburg, the authoress of a prison epic, and she offered a great deal of help to Nadežda Mandel'štam. She was elected as a deputy to a low-level regional Soviet and tried her best to

help dozens of homeless people.

The peak of her social activity was Joseph Brodsky's trial, of whose proceedings she made a shorthand record. This was a heroic deed, on account of which millions of people were able to know what was going on in the trial and after his release in one year and a half, Brodsky praised her. Her name became well-known. But the Party organization of the Soviet Writers' Union was already eager to investigate her case and to expel her from the Union. By this time, she was mortally sick. The authorities graciously gave her a chance to die out of jail, without official harassment.

Frida Vigdorova's close friend, Raisa Orlova, whose life was described in her own book *Memoirs*, left us another important document of our time.[11] Her story of herself describes the life of a Soviet woman with her devotion to the Soviet system and the Communist Party, as well as with her three dramatic marriages. Born in 1918, mother of two daughters and a Party member, Raisa Orlova made a remarkable career in Soviet society. She spent many years in Estonia and Romania while they were occupied by the Soviet army, but gradually, step after step, she alienated herself from the Party's official line. With her husband, Lev Kopelev, she was able to make her own important contribution to the post-Stalinist human-rights movement. Their children played a most outstanding role in the 1960's and 1970's and their parents' help to them cannot be over-estimated. However, the result was inevitable: expulsion from the Party, emigration in 1980, and the subsequent deprivation of their Soviet citizenship.

There are many women who did not give up and participated in "The Trust of Good Actions". They stayed hand-in-hand with those who spoke out. They collected money for the families of those blacklisted and jailed. They stood by the beds of the sick and the dying. They baptized their own children and were baptized themselves. They were themselves expelled from the Party for having signed the petitions which were so full of humanity and compassion. And those expelled from the Party helped to bring famous prisoners out of Russia. Without these women, life would have been miserable and hopeless. It is about them that Pasternak wrote in his appeal to God: "Soften the bitterness of my deathbed by the last female caress."[12]

CHAPTER SEVEN

Non-Party Members

Compared to those who join the Communist Party, there are many more people who prefer to stay away from becoming its members. Their reasons are various and manifold. He or she may be the children of Jewish parents or of those having *kulak* origins. His parents or close relatives may have been repressed under Stalin or after his death. Their relatives might live abroad or have recently emigrated there and others are afraid to apply for membership because they do not want to divulge before a curious public what is concealed in their hearts. Some others do not even think about joining the Party. These do not understand why they should join an organization which will prescribe how they must behave, what friends to have and what books to read. This group of people includes a good percentage of women who consider the Party membership as utterly alien to their feminine nature and future goals. These women may think that their real or future husbands will join the Party lest their family lead a much more modest existence than they wish, but they themselves would unequivocally refrain from swelling the ranks of that body. To enroll oneself in the Party means to be a different woman. Too often those women who sign up for the Party cannot rely upon their feminine charms. These people do not want to join the Party ranks and are devoid of any illusions about the Communist Party and its numerous members. In their judgment, all those people have entered the Party because they care about their careers and want to earn better money. As a rule, members of this sizable group which stays away from Party membership are not very ambitious for personal gain.

A large group of people, after soul-searching deliberation, decide not to join the Party at all. They assume that it would be utterly dishonest for them to join a Party comprised of all kinds of criminals, murderers, crooks, scoundrels and entrapped simpletons. Such decisions are not made very easily, but to change their minds and enter the Party would more often than not signify the betrayal of their friends' confidence and change of friends. These people are brought up in families where parents and grown-up relatives do not disguise their hate for the Soviet system which is based on the Party and the KGB. Their parents or relatives could have been imprisoned under Stalin or tortured and executed. These people live with this trauma and the best they can do is to conceal their real thoughts from their senior officials and from all sorts of Party superiors. Naturally, there are various subgroups

among these people, including those who at some stage of their life, under the pressure of life convince themselves to revise their obdurate idiosyncrasies and join the Party. But those who abstain from the Party can be divided again into at least five different groups.

The first group includes those who hate the Party and cannot, even for a single moment, imagine themselves as Party members. These people see the system as embodied and personified evil. They find Soviet life so cruel, stupid and meaningless[1], that at least in their thoughts and hearts, they are potentially able to join any uprising or riot against the government. The hate for the "Communist system", the reluctance to help the system in any way, the dream of its collapse one day in the near or distant future, their intention to stay away not only from Party membership, but also from a company of Party members - these ideas constitute what somewhat resembles their code of behavior which almost replaces the Bible. The majority of my friends in Russia and the friends of their friends were such people. It was people who were oriented and inspired in this way that formed the majority of those who participated in the dissident movement of the 1960's and 1970's. There is no force in the world which can reconcile these people to the system of evil that exists in Soviet Russia. Nothing can make them like the Communist Party which has built and perpetuated this society. When these people find themselves in the West, one cannot describe their amazement and gradual indignation at the vision of Western public opinion, so lenient and condescending towards Soviet society, its leaders and the brutal living conditions there. These people are the product of Soviet society and they will find it difficult to adapt to any other. Whatever mistaken ideas about Russia or the West they may have, they can be seen among the most interesting, intellectual and efficient members of their society. They know how to endure the enormous pressures of their society. Their experience in social action is handicapped and limited, for each such action may be dangerous and even fatal for them, but only rare people know how many good and noble deeds and gestures are done on a daily basis by these people. Without advertising their actions and thoughts, without their left hand knowing what their right hand is doing, they support people in trouble, console them, bring money to the needy and send parcels and letters to those imprisoned and their families. They are not afraid of meeting foreigners and of exchanging letters with their friends abroad and in exile. Without these people, life in Russia would be a real desert.

They do not necessarily despise all members of the Communist Party. They do understand that even among them there is a good percentage of relatively honest and noble-minded people, even if they are concerned about their Party membership. These people do not necessarily belong to the Russian Orthodox Church. On the contrary,

many of them stay away from any Church activities. In many of them, one can perceive the undestroyed and inextinguishable faith in human beings, and the awareness that even some minimal assistance in a dire necessity can produce more than a desirable effect. The examples of this selfless help, are very numerous, moving, and inspiring.

These people cannot be easily cheated. They are neither overly sentimental nor exceedingly talkative. They know the abilities and downfalls of human nature. The nightmare and the morbid countenance of some humans is not able to strike them dead; they have become accustomed to human barbarism and savagery; but each case of compassion, humanity and noble-mindedness gives them additional food to live by and to think about. They are not anti-religious, but they never over-emphasize their religious feelings, either. At the same time they feel uncomfortable at the sight of exaggerated or even slightly unreserved religious self-expression. There are various Russian intellectuals, including Boris Pasternak, Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Andrei Sakharov, for whom entrance into the Party would have signified a crucial disaster in their ideals and their spectacular personalities. This group of Russians also includes Dmitrij Panin, the prototype of Sologdin from *In the First Circle* by A. Solzhenitsyn. Dmitrij Panin, the author of various books published abroad, considers the Communist Party to be the personification of the Devil. To fight against the Party and the system based upon it is the duty of each honest person. In his eyes, to be a Party member is incompatible with faith and human dignity.[2]

Aleksandr Essenin-Vol'pin, a philosopher, a mathematician and a poet, is ready to defend each priest or Christian imprisoned or harassed in Russia.[3] But he furiously opposes any attempts made by religious people to announce their privileged position in the world and their close relationships to the deity. He dislikes the unambiguous complacency with which some think they hold the truth in their hands or pockets. He has seen too many mental hospitals, too many young and innocent human beings thrown into jail, he has too often witnessed the hypocrisy and callousness of "Christian" in order to believe their stories. In his relationships with God, he goes incomparably further than Job. He does not reject Jesus Christ, but one is puzzled by trying to understand his real attitude towards His image. When asked about Jesus Christ, Vol'pin responds somewhat meditatively, passionately, with glittering eyes: "Christ was a good fellow! During his trial he behaved himself very well. There was nothing wrong on his 'part'." If asked about his belief in the existence of a transcendental world and the ultimate account we have to pay to the Creator, Aleksandr Vol'pin, after a few words, which could be interpreted as a kind of blasphemy, and raising two fingers of his right hand in front of his smiling and excited eyes, will

utter: "But we shall have some questions for Him. Why has He created the world in this way and not in some other? What has made Him overlook so many things and actions in our world, especially in that lousy part of the world which is called Russia? We shall ask Him! We shall demand that He respond to us. This is not so simple, as some believers think. And you, G., you will yourself give an account for your wrong religious views!"

This does not mean that his views about religious people in Russia should be unquestioningly accepted. Too many religious people are scattered all over Russia; they will never think of joining the body of the Communist Party which for them is the anti-Christ. In general, these people, whether they are old women, grey-bearded men, highly intelligent and well-mannered ladies, or younger people, do not talk too much and they are not easily available for conversation. They also know, quite often from their personal experience, about cruel reality, the persecutions of millions and the retribution of God. The unprecedented social injustice and holocausts have never diminished their faith. Their meek muteness grows along with piety. They are not in a hurry to become martyrs; they know how easily one can be chosen for this lot. But they have an inexhaustible well of endurance and patience. They are among those just men for whose sake God promised Abraham not to destroy the city of Sodom if he could find ten of them in it.

There exists another huge group of people in Russia who abstain from joining the Party, but do not condemn or rebuke those who have become Party members. They would not qualify it as diabolical or Satanical. They will not praise these people for having joined the Party, but they are aware how easily one can be tempted to enlist in this body and set out on the one-way road without exit. They can see that they themselves have avoided this destiny by almost a miracle, and they try not to judge those people out of fear that they themselves might be caught by the snare. In their vision, life is too complicated and confusing to apply extremely short yardsticks and straightforward approaches to our spiritual existence and survival.

Another group of people includes many who for years stand one inch away from entering the Party. Time and again, Party officials invite them to join their glorious body of functionaries. They will answer them with words like "I am not yet entirely ready," or "I will apply for the membership in a few months", while they tell their close friends that they still keep up their defense against those who recruit them into the Party or that their capacity to resist the pressure to join the Party shrinks and becomes progressively more feeble. By clowning and postponing the decision, these people might continue this cat and mouse game for years until the participants in the game die, retire, or grow tired and ultimately give up.

Another group of talented and strong-willed people make their life-long decision not to join the Communist Party but then make some compromises to become efficient and prominent in their field. These can be builders and engineers, workers and architects, designers of airplanes and nuclear bombs, physicists and chemists, anthropologists and archeologists, poets and translators, historians and linguists, actors and artists. They know better than most other people that without being Party members, they will again and again face huge and insurmountable obstacles, but nevertheless, they decide to yield slightly to Party pressure and agree to make certain compromises in their dealings with the authorities on account of which they will be able not only to survive but even flourish in their field.

This huge group is the real foundation of Soviet society and forms one of its chief creative and renovating forces. Free from any enslaving and stultifying chains of Party membership, these people understand perfectly well the real nature of Soviet society. At some stage in their lives, they might have been the Party policy's victims and inmates of prison camps; their close relatives could have been arrested or executed; but after their ordeal and turmoil, these people come to the conclusion that it is of no avail to struggle against the system which seems so stable and indestructible because of its strength and cruelty. Intellectually and morally, they are discreet and adequately honest. Without blaming others who join the Communist Party, they consider that this move would be dishonest in their own case, but they feel little or no remorse in working to make it militarily stronger and much more appealing economically and politically.

To paraphrase Valentin Turchin's concept, these people permit the Party to milk them.[4] They feel that their creative energy or business talents should be directed in some way within their own country for an appropriate reward in due time. Naturally, these people are not hermetically sealed off in their business, science, or art. They have their families, wives, children and friends, and more often than not, the state and its guardians generously lavish upon them the various privileges and awards so prudently envisaged by the state regulations for its talented and self-sacrificing citizens. Having established their reputation in their field, these people are not in a hurry to become Party members even at the later stage of their activities, and the Party authorities take for granted their aspirations to remain relatively emancipated intellectually from Party bonds and prescriptions. Furthermore, these people are unprecedentedly independent in their private lives. They are not persecuted for reading the prohibited literature. The authorities will patiently overlook their joys in entertaining pretty lovers and some of them are even allowed to practice their homosexual and lesbian inclinations. They are allowed to go

abroad if, of course, there is a good guarantee that they will not defect. Their religious and church preoccupations will also be ignored, if all these attractions and passions do not become socially perilous and infectious. However, in extreme cases, these persons might develop into moral titans of Andrei Sakharov's caliber.

A widespread phenomenon in Soviet Russia is that of the so-called "non-Party Bolshevik", which concerns the situation in which a person has not joined the Communist Party formally but shows by his social behavior that he not only assents to the Party-spirited ideas, but belongs to the Party and embraces the spirit of Party-mindedness with his whole personality. The above-mentioned R. Samarin, who worked in the Institute of World Literature, is a colorful example of such a personality.[5] A prominent figure in the post-war period of Soviet literature, Leonid Sobolev was another example of this phenomenon. About him, Nikita Khrushchev said that "the non-Party Sobolev is closer to me than the Party member Aliger".[6] This phenomenon is enormously widespread in Soviet Russia and many of these people are suspected by those around them of secret co-operation with the KGB. This aspect of the Soviet mentality is extremely interesting, curious, and mysterious. In relation to these people one can ask various questions, which are not easy to answer. Why do these intellectually and spiritually bright people offer their voluntary or semi-voluntary service to the Party without enrolling in it formally? Why do these people not join the Communist Party like many others and attain the privileges bestowed upon Party members for lesser service?

This phenomenon characterizes the Soviet psychology and the Communist Party institution from an important and revealing angle. As a rule, these people are bright intellectually and to a certain extent they have distinguished themselves in their own field. In their family background or their adolescence, there were obstacles preventing them from entering the Party: R. Samarin belonged to a privileged family under the Tsarist regime and he was brought up by educated and relatively honest people who considered joining the Party to be an ethical misdemeanor. However, at some stage of their early adult life, the state security could establish somewhat close contacts with them, spotting vulnerable points, their moral instability, cowardliness, *etc.*, thus saddling for themselves the right horse. Somehow, the favors and services they render to the state convince them and the Party officials dealing with them that it is in the best interests of the Party, and probably some hidden institution as well, to make full use of these non-Party persons.

Such a deal satisfies both sides. In the eyes of the Party superiors and the state security, these people are highly reliable, flexible, intelligent, sociable and well-informed. Even if they are suspected and

cold-shouldered by their immediate milieu, they can still form an essential source of services and information. These people can be authorized to administer important institutions with sensitive functions. They may be entitled to present Party views at public gatherings. They can be sent abroad for various delicate missions and in all cases their non-Party status will gain them credit in the eyes of those people who nourish less than respectful feelings towards the Communist Party's filthy business and numerous Party heralds. The gratified government and security institutions find tangible means and highly prestigious rewards to flatter these people's vainglorious ambition and sense that they are making an incredibly significant contribution to the welfare and cultural build-up of the country. Those working in high Party institutions and official bodies know the tricks used to manipulate semantics and concepts related to patriotic subjects. They will refrain from talking about the Soviet Union and even the glorious cause of the Communist Party, but will praise the Russian patriotism of their conversationalist and throw hot coals into the furnace of his love for Russia, Russian literature, his Russian national dignity, his feelings of anti-Semitism and quite often his pro-Russian Orthodox Church feelings as well.

At the same time, their non-Party partners will also remain relatively satisfied. It seems to them that they exert a formidable impact on events in the country. They exercise their influence in hiring people or firing them. They make important recommendations to the government and the authorities seem to pay heed to their opinions before they initiate any serious steps in their own field. Quite frequently, they confuse their authority and influence with their obligation to function as puppets, pawns and hatchetmen, but this perception will evade them, for they tend to indulge in illusions of self-importance and complacency. They live in a world of their own phantasies, rejoicing that they draw nearer to the time when their Russophilic or monarchistic, Jewish or Georgian dominating ideas will gain the upper hand. And, beyond doubt, they never fail to confide to their intimate friends and cronies their own gladness and pleasure for having succeeded in staying away from the Party and not defiling themselves with its membership. Their conscience is clear. The estrangement of their inner world, their conscience, from the outside reality and from their everyday social and creative activities, is almost complete. Both sides participating in this Mephistophelian agreement cannot see how their agreement could be better and more mutually satisfactory.

So the huge army of non-Party people live and work in that big country, sharing diversified opinions and keeping various positions in the society. As we have seen, there are all kinds of people among them, including those who are ready to turn their rage toward this totalitarian regime into a self-sacrificial struggle, those who silently,

patiently endure its abnormalities or exigencies, and those who serve the regime even more zealously than the Party members themselves. Their manifold service to the society can be creative and reasonably limited, or perverted. They can create their own friendly circles of non-Party people, into which Party members are discouraged to enter, although eventually some of them can be given access and endured. These friendly circles exist all over the country. Their role seems substantial in keeping the spirit of their participants at a due level and providing them with accessible information. At some crucial points of the country's history, the influence of these friendly circles might be relatively significant and recognizable, but its final impact should not be over-estimated because the state security police does its utmost to keep its keen eye on their life and immediate ambitions or dangerous schemes.

Something peculiar takes place and lingers in a society where the majority of the country, the non-Party people, live side-by-side with those almost twenty million Party members who create a kind of secular church, not very visible, but permeating each cell and each house of the country. This is not a Theocracy, but it reminds us of one too closely. Up to twenty million Party-carded people walk up and down the streets of Soviet cities, towns and villages. These are the brahmins and the mandarins of this huge society, radically new in the history of the human race. They are neither the temple priests of ancient Egypt nor the mullahs of the Islamic countries. They are not the priests and monks of medieval Europe or Russia. Nevertheless, they are fully aware of their being different from others by remaining to some extent privileged and probably bearing the seal of Cain on their foreheads. The non-Party people know that they do not belong to this new sacerdotal class. Many of these non-Party people are constantly unhappy in feeling this inferiority on their part. They wish to put an end to their hurt feelings and to join this privileged class. On the other hand, many others work and live, love and rest, cheat and deal, forgetting about this crucial gap between the initiated and those free from at least these bonds. But there are also many of those who feel almost each minute that, "something is slightly wrong in the air", to use Galich's words.

Whether it is the spirit of Party-mindedness or devilishness, this rotten, poisonous and intoxicating gas prevents almost everybody from breathing unconstrainedly and freely as the wind. As Tvardovskij wrote in his *Tyorkin in the Other World*, even the tobacco smoke is different and the sound of the domino chips, played by millions, seems so unfamiliar and strange.[7] The tiny, sticky Spring leaves on budding trees - the greatest miracle of our world - whisper about the serfdom of those who never blossom or thrive. The mirror-like surface of the enticingly beautiful lakes and ponds reminds a neutral observer that

even the waves and the water have been captured by evil spirits and bewitched until a good magician should arrive and touch these objects and creatures with his wand. With all their gracious beauty, the Taiga pine forests and the Russian birch groves almost moan under their invisible burden and yoke. The seas and the ocean are blocked and murmur of their pirated border stripes. Even the blue sky complains of being violently and constantly raped. Black magic has spread all over Russia, and the Communist Party is the key to all these incredible mysteries and misfortunes. While all the centralized media, newspapers, books, radio, movies and theatres convince the country's citizens that they have reached the zenith of happiness and cannot be any more blissful, the rest of the world scratches its neck, striving to understand what is really going on in the minds of these Soviets who feel so happy in their seclusion from the free world. Many non-Party people think over and over about what really should be undertaken in order to transform even for an iota this horrifyingly morbid society, which exceeds the cruelty of the worst past civilizations, where people were forced to build the giant pyramids, erect the great Chinese wall and construct the Colosseum to see the gladiators' fratricidal tournaments and fighting between armless people and wild predators as well as the trials and stakes of the inquisitions.

Non-Party members may join the ruling Party machine through various relatively open channels. But there is at least one hidden and secret channel of recruiting them as relevant screws of the machinery, which has to be briefly mentioned. This involves converting them into a network of secret informers or stool-pigeons of the KGB. To be a Soviet man means to be a country's patriot and to defend the Party's interests. This means to expose and denounce all possible spies and anti-Soviet elements in the society. In Stalin's time, hundreds of thousands of people were imprisoned for not denouncing anti-Soviet talk and actions to the Soviet secret police. Party members may easily suffer for these "crimes" of non-denunciation. Instructed to lead the backward and non-Party masses to the heights of Communism, Party members should be honest before the Party and the people. Translated into an intelligible language, this means unequivocally that any Party member should inform his Party comrades and superiors, who keep in close touch with the state security, about the most insignificant cases of deviation from the prescribed Party line, officially sanctioned actions, and uniform thoughts and utterances. In other words, each Party member already serves as a freelance informer who should not be necessarily paid for the patriotic services prescribed by his Party membership.

This does not signify that the entire one hundred percent of Party members go to sleep and dream with only one intention: to hurry as

early as possible after the dawn to the nearest headquarters of the glorious state security and inform them about everything they had observed during the previous day and after twilight. Soviet folklore does not exclude such semi-voluntary commitments on the part of the Soviet people and some dramatic consequences that accompany a deviation from these "musts". One former prisoner, asked for the reason of his incarceration, replied: "for being lazy". When he was asked to elaborate his alleged sluggishness in some detail, he explained: "We had been exchanging jokes with a good friend of mine until the late midnight. When we parted, I asked myself whether I should go at once to the KGB and inform them about our conversation. However, I felt lazy and decided to postpone my visit to that office until the next morning. But soon after I fell asleep, they came to my apartment and arrested me." Apparently, one of these friends, so appreciative of witty jokes, was not irresponsibly slothful.

The state security would have been a rather silly and sloppy body of slumberous sluggards and many of its former agents who have survived would have long ago celebrated the end of Soviet totalitarianism along with other freedom-lovers, if the extremely important job of information gathering would have solely depended upon these semi-voluntary visits and denunciations by millions of Party members. A good part of Party members surely live in accordance with their highly esteemed commitments and whatever they know about what takes place around them, is timely and accurately delivered to the omniscient state security. But without any exaggeration, we should state that a good part of the Party-membered army either knows very little about what is going on in the womb of this society, based on equality and fraternity, or they will not lift a finger in order to inform their Party comrades-in-arms and the immortal glory-blanketed state security about the confidential and anti-Soviet information, to which they have gained access. As a rule, Party members know very little about what is going on in the minds of their happy or unhappy countrymen for the simple reason that people around them try their best to conceal from them everything which might be directed against them themselves.[8] Along with that, many Party members will even ask their friends not to discuss in their presence some specific subjects, letting them know implicitly that they will be unable to hold back from reporting that information. Sociologically, an extremely interesting phenomenon is that some people connected with the world of knowledge and administration emphasize their intention not to know certain things which are assumed to be quite important and relevant. But for the Party in general, an even less auspicious and more hazardous phenomenon is connected with the well-established fact that many of their allegedly devoted members consider it below their dignity to divulge to the Party

authorities and then to the KGB the content of their confidential discussions with their intimate friends. These Party members are prepared to turn their bayonets against their own Party, for they have no illusions whatsoever about the Party's nature, intention and goals. George Orwell, Arthur Koestler, Aleksandr Orlov and Petr Grigorenko are only a few of those former Communists who fearlessly struggled with the Communist plague. In Ignazio Silone's famous words, "It is only the former Communists who are able to fight and defeat Communism."[9]

In general, Communist Party members ought to be dismissed as potentially efficient informers and stool-pigeons for the KGB. The involvement of these people in the Party speaks for itself, and they cannot know a great deal of what is going on in the minds and hearts of many people. Party members are marked and branded, and the KGB needs more flexible and reliable agents. These can be recruited from the quiet, silent, unattractive and modest people. A good majority of these stool-pigeons can be recruited from non-Party people.

Recruiting non-Party people as stool-pigeons is the surest way of turning them into "non-Party Bolsheviks". There is no more need for them to join the Party because they have already become involved in it. These people admitted at the first interview that they are Soviet citizens. In other words, the goals of the Soviet government and of the Party are their own. By having agreed voluntarily or under coercion to function as informers, stool-pigeons, or *agents provocateurs*, these people have announced, as their priority, service to the Party-based system through one of its most hidden and efficient channels. Like Party members, they become the flesh and blood of the social body, and regardless of what happens with them later, they will be unable to wash off the dirt and blood from their own heart. These stool-pigeons were killed and ruthlessly strangled by prisoners in Russia.[10]

The infamous Feliks Karelin is one of the most frightening figures in this group. A KGB-paid *provocateur*, he disclosed his stool-pigeon identity to his friends and was almost immediately arrested by the KGB and given ten years of imprisonment. In order to be cut off from his KGB past[11] he was given another ten years in a prison camp, Taiset. There, he was baptized into the Russian Orthodox Church and upon his release from the camp during Khrushchev's "thaw", he repeatedly tried to become a Russian Orthodox priest, but each time failed because of the same KGB veto. In the late 1950's and early 1960's, he played an important role in reviving the Russian religious spirit. His words were permeated by passion and zeal, his eyes were glittering with religious enthusiasm. He was surrounded by many young people who were not always capable of discerning what was really good in him from what was false and rotten. In the Fall of 1965, Feliks Karelin participated in

discussions about what could be done to improve church policy in the Soviet Union and he made an essential contribution to the letter of two priests to the Patriarch of the Russian Church, Reverend Nikolaj Esliman and Gleb Jakunin. Feliks Karelin's official position was almost nil, and there was little indication that the authorities persecuted him for his part in the letter. In 1972, Feliks Karelin published abroad an article which defended Solzhenitsyn for his letter to the patriarch and blamed Fr. Sergej Želudkov for his "uninspired" answer to Solzhenitsyn.[12] The letter also synthesized, in a suspicious and weird manner, the ideas of the Church with the goal of the God-strangling Soviet state. At the trial of Father Jakunin, it was Feliks Karelin who testified against the defendant. The vicious circle was complete. St. Peter wrote about these false teachers:

> People like this are dried-up rivers, fogs swirling in the wind, and the dark underworld is the place reserved for them. With their high-flown talk, which is all hollow, they tempt back the ones who have only just escaped from paganism, playing on their bodily desires with debaucheries; they may promise freedom but they themselves are slaves, slaves to corruption; because if anyone lets himself be dominated by anything, then he is a slave to it; and anyone who has escaped the pollution of the world once by coming to know our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and who then allows himself to be entangled by it a second time and mastered, will end up in a worse state than he began in. It would have been even better for him never to have learnt the way of holiness, than to know it and afterwards desert the holy rule that was entrusted to him. What he has done is exactly as the proverb rightly says: 'The dog goes back to his own vomit' and 'When the sow has been washed, it wallows in the mud'." (2 Peter 2; 17-22)

If one must really weep over some people in our world, such are exactly the KGB stool-pigeons, for whom no salvation seems to exist. Well-known thieves in Russia dealt with these people in one way only: they physically exterminated them. By having gained the trust of their friends and afterwards denounced them to the KGB, these stool-pigeons are worse than the murderers who fulfill their lousy business more or less openly. The stool-pigeons ruin the souls of their friends, producing in them an incessant fire of consternation and hurt. They ruin their spouses and children. They betray the holy name of friendship and intimacy. The fabric of their family life is rotten because they are never capable of opening their heart's secrets even to their own wives, husbands and children. Their wives or their husbands feel nothing but contempt towards them. Their children carry disgust for

their parents in their hearts. They are ashamed of being Cain's children. But the worst thing about these people is that they burn their consciences and transform their souls into a den of devils and evil. They are alien to peace and common human joys. Fear accompanies them until they breathe their last. Through them, one may better understand the nature of Stalin and Hitler who needed to suck more and more blood from others and to commit still more heinous crimes after another outburst of their cannibalistic temper. What consolation can these stool-pigeons have after they see their victims, their best friends in recent years and days, arrested, jailed or beheaded? Judas Iscariot's suicide is the best reward for them. Thirty silver coins had been thrown back to Anna and Caiaphas but the hell in their souls burns and the remorse their actions express reminds us slightly of what is really going on inside their chests.

Another prominent figure in the world of Moscow's stool-pigeons was Jakov Efimovič El'sberg, a well-known scholar of Russian and Soviet literature, a self-confessed KGB stool-pigeon and a person with a tragic life.[13] Born in 1901 in a wealthy Jewish family, Jakov El'sberg was arrested in the early 1920's for dealing with diamonds in the black market and sent to Solovki. For such dealings, the accused were sometimes even executed, but El'sberg was soon released. Most probably prior to his release, he was recruited by the OGPU, as the KGB was then named. He started his work in the media and in the 1920's participated in the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers headed by Averbach, who was eventually arrested along with the group of his followers *Napostovcy*. After that, El'sberg worked as a scholarly secretary in "Academia" headed by Lev B. Kamenev, who was ultimately put on trial and executed. Perhaps, at this time, El'sberg's ties with the secret police became more tight and irreversible.

El'sberg continued his research in Russian literature, published a book about Alexander Herzen, a great Russian revolutionary writer and secured a solid position in the IMLI. Isaac Babel was said to have been arrested on account of El'sberg: "Because of El'sberg I'll rot among these walls." This note was ascribed to Babel, arrested in the late 1930's. After World War Two, Jakov El'sberg was very friendly with writers and scholars such as M.J. Levidov, C.A. Makasin, E.L. Stejnberg, L.J. Pinskij. All of them were soon arrested: Levidov died in a prison camp. The three others were released from the prison camps in the period of the "thaw". Having established close relationships among themselves in prison, they shared their suspicions about El'sberg, whose highly ambiguous role no longer aroused any doubts.

The brief story of relationships betwen Stejnberg and El'sberg is as follows. Both of these non-Party writers were close friends for fifteen years. Stejnberg had a good family and was frequently visited by

El'sberg, a bachelor. Štejnberg's little daughter grew up on El'sberg's lap. In 1951, Štejnberg was arrested. On the same day when El'sberg visited their apartment, Tatjana Štejnberg informed El'sberg about the disaster and he burst into tears in front of Evgenij's portrait. He kept on visiting Štejnberg's wife each evening and their intimate discussions, including her revelations about her "Testament" for her daughter in case of her death, were concentrated around the subject of the accusations that could be presented against her arrested husband and El'sberg's close friend. Then Tatjana was summoned to a KGB interrogator and from the conversation with him, Tatjana Štejnberg obtained more than a mere hint that El'sberg had informed the KGB about her "Testament" for their daughter. Upon her return home, she confided her suspicion to her daughter who was frightened at the mere suggestion that they might have been betrayed by a person who, in the words of the account by N.L Janevič, which she heard from the Štejnbergs themselves, "loved them more than anybody else in the world and actually was their relative!" However, after a short interval of time, Tatjana Štejnberg received from her husband, who had already been removed to a prison camp, a card ending with a highly meaningful phrase: "You can refrain from greeting Jakov." Everything became clear in Tatjana Akimovna's mind and on the same evening she asked El'sberg to leave their house. Without saying anything, he made an about-face and left.

In the account of Evgenij Štejnberg himself, at the end of his interrogation period, his interrogator said that Stejnberg had concealed and warmed up a snake in his own breast. These words in Štejnberg's narration, which were independently confirmed both by Janevič and A. Levitin-Krasnov, appear rather incredible, with all sympathies to the late Evgenij Štejnberg.

Štejnberg's discovery about his intimate friend Jakov were fully supported by Leonid Pinskij who had been El'sberg's close friend as well and arrested about the same time as Štejnberg. I became friendly with Leonid Pinskij during the late 1950's and throughout the 1960's. He let me know personally several times that he had no doubts at all about the real nature of Jakov El'sberg's activities. However, I remember quite clearly that Leonid Efimovic Pinskij used to say with his inimitable irony that he was very grateful to El'sberg for his role since it had made his further lecturing at the Moscow State University impossible.

Štejnberg and Pinskij remained close friends until the sudden death of the former. El'sberg's role in Štejnberg's life appeared absolutely fatal. In his conversations with Leonid Pinskij, in N. Janevič's presence, Štejnberg qualified El'sberg as a slanderer and stool-pigeon, not without serious grounds, as we have seen. Leonid Pinskij evaluated

the personality of El'sberg more philosophically and less personally: "Why should we scold a filthy stream leaking from a toilet if the toilet itself is the cause of all the troubles? Should one blame an informer when it is necessary to talk about the system generating the informers?"

Pinskij himself recalled his frequent meetings with El'sberg prior to his arrest when he used to drink coffee with El'sberg. After his release, his friends advised him to see El'sberg and ask him to write several lines, stating that his testimony against Pinskij had been given under duress. It was not very easy to visit the man who had been the cause of his arrest, but Leonid Efimovic did so. The moment El'sberg saw Pinskij in front of his door, he fearfully backed up, but then collected his feelings and invited Leonid Efimovič to enter his well-known apartment, where they had been discussing so many things and drinking coffee in those dreadful post-war years. "I will not enter your place", Leonid Efimovič said, "I have come here with the goal that you would write to the corresponding organs that your testimony against me had been made under pressure. In that case, I will be acquitted sooner." To Pinskij's astonishment, El'sberg answered in full readiness: "Dictate to me, what and where it should be written. I shall do that at once." In Janevič's narration, Pinskij was so overwhelmed by El'sberg's readiness, that he backed up and never asked El'sberg to do that favor.

Several years later, Evgenij Štejnberg was asked by I.I. Čičerov, the head of the Soviet Authors' Branch, to write in detail the story of his relationships with El'sberg. Čičerov's request had been stimulated by the intention of the Union's Party administration to raise the question regarding the expulsion of Jakov El'sberg from the Authors' Union, because numerous persons, especially the children of those arrested and tortured to death in prisons because of El'sberg, had demanded these measures against the stool-pigeon. For four days, Evgenij Štejnberg was reconstructing all the details of his ordeal with El'sberg in the peace of his study. Having finished his tumultuous account, he brought it to the Union's Party organization, but he was so much upset with the psychodrama that when he came back home he fell ill and a half an hour later he died.

Štejnberg perished while El'sberg fared well almost until the end of his days. He continued to write his works such as *The Moral Foundations of Leninist Philosophy*. He was released from the chairmanship of the Department at the IMLI, but he remained in his position as professor, senior research fellow and member of the Scholarly Council. El'sberg was finally expelled from the Moscow branch of the Writers' Union, but when the question of his expulsion was raised at the Writers' Union of the Russian Federation, El'sberg out-maneuvered his enemies. At the meeting, he questioned: "Why do

you judge me? I have been asked to put down all the political conversatons of my colleagues, and I did it. I served the Soviet people! And besides that, why should I answer for all this alone? Look here, such and such comrade is sitting here and he has accomplished the same functions as myself. And this comrade, and this one also ... Why do you not put them on trial, too?" These senior officials released Jakov El'sberg, without any other reprimand.

Anyhow, his final years were not that happy and peaceful. The scandal of his close bonds with the KGB became widely known to Moscow's educated public. Once, while El'sberg was at a dinner in a writer's restaurant, one author, slightly loaded, rushed at El'sberg shouting "You bloody rat and murderer!" and threw a bowl of soup in his face. El'sberg got up at once and left the restaurant. Since that time he never turned up in the building of the Writer's Union or its restaurant. He was constantly scared of something. Later, in the early 1970's, as Janevič narrates, he was standing at the trolley-bus stand after the meeting of his Scholarly Council, when a young man pushed him to the side with great force. El'sberg fell upon the sidewalk and could not stand up. His hip appeared to be broken. After being confined for a long time in the hospital, he was released, but could not move without crutches. Soon he died, too. Nobody, besides El'sberg, knew whether the young man who had hit him did so by accident or acted out of revenge for some of those who had been deprived of their parents due to El'sberg's denunciation.

Many features in his personality and biography make us think so. He was not lacking assiduity and interest for scholarly work. He selected young and capable students at the university and he brought them forth with warmth and care. The Department he headed consisted of the most gifted persons in the Institute. In the last years of his life, he took special care of various scholars of the Institute and generously lent money to his needy colleagues. Did he do so to compensate for his contemptible activities during several decades preceding the 1970's?

Many questions should be more properly answered by those who knew him closely. Where was his real nature when he was taking care of Evgenij Štejnberg's little daughter, caressing her, bringing her candies, theater tickets and weeping in front of the portrait of Štejnberg, arrested earlier that day? What did he intend when he was sitting alone and locked in his bachelor's room and wrote, word after word, each utterance of his closest friend whose wife he might have loved if this word might be applied to this man at all? What made him write with such diligence and abundance about the moral image of the Soviet man? Did he believe in the Communist morality which had made him such a rarely unhappy, miserable person without his own family, without close friends, without respect, constantly expecting insults - like the

contents of the soup bowl thrown into his face at the resaurant, with his colleagues and acquaintances watching the theatrical performance and doing nothing but gloating? What was he thinking when he was regularly summoned to the private, clandestine headquarters of the KGB, where some new official interrogated him politely about the conversations he had with his friends, while the same official was suppressing his contempt towards this person who was a murderer of his numerous highly talented friends and at the same time an almost unrivalled victim of the Soviet secret police? While remembering all those secret police investigators, who had been interrogating and torturing him since the early 1920's, did he gloat that his own torturers gradually disappeared in Hades after their victims left this world? Did El'sberg identify himself with the executioners or with their victims?

Born into a wealthy Jewish family, did he repent that he did not flee from the inflamed revolutionary Russia and did not go abroad where he could have made his fortune and traded diamonds or something else of that kind? Did he often regret that he had not been executed for his black-marketeering with diamonds in the first years of the young Soviet republic? If so, would he have avoided such a horrible, disgusting life with its ceaseless double-dealing, summons to the damned secret police, expectations of his own arrest and execution for the imprisonments and deaths of those who were later exonerated and reinstalled on the Soviet honor roll? Why had he never married? Because of his ugly appearance, with his elongated and entirely hairless skull, with his black eyes, sharp as nails, which frightened everybody around him? Or did he refrain from marriage, despite his good money and relatively well-established position, because he knew better than many, many others how unstable was our world and how shaky and fragile was human life in this ideal socialist system, with "from each, according to his abilities, and to each, according to his labor"? Did he feel that he was born into this world with the abilities to function as the most despicable stool-pigeon, in order to push his close friends nearer to the scaffold and the gallows, to compile his facts about other victims and in the meantime write about the paradise-like Communist society, where people love each other and live in full equality, fraternity and freedom from eavesdropping and mutual surveillance?

Why did he not join the Communist Party? Was he not allowed to enter the proletarian Party as the son of the exploiting, bourgeois, degenerating class? Or was it because the KGB officials who were engaged in shaping his life considered that El'sberg would have been much more useful for them as a "non-Party Bolshevik"? Or was it for that simple reason that Jakov El'sberg hated the regime, about which he conversed critically, intelligently and extensively with Stejnberg, Pinskij and others? Did he think that it was enough for him to

co-operate with those enemies of the human race who had been keeping his body and soul in chains for almost fifty years, although he still managed to think that there was some hope for him in the world to come and therefore the agreement with the devil had not been finalized? All his denunciations and testimony had been extorted from him under coercion and threat of death, but he still succeeded in keeping intact a tiny room of breathing space for his own survival.

The lengthy list of those with whom he had been working or with whom he was simply on friendly terms, might have disturbed his peace from time to time. L. Averbach tried his best to please the Party and where was he now? And as for Lev Kamenev with many other great Marxists, what was the real cause of their untimely exit from the world stage? Could one explain that only by Stalin's ruthlessness and cannibalism? These holocausts were demanded by the *Weltgeist* in that particular time. He was nothing else but a driving belt of the proletariat's dictatorship, which he had cursed many a time during his life-span. In his judgement, there should not have been any personal hurt feelings. He had been devoted to Evgenij Štejnberg, his wife Tatjana, and their daughter Olga. In his judgement, Štejnberg might have never understood the whirling of the wheel of history. There was a time for tender friendship and a time for giving an account to those who personify the merciless and seemingly blind laws of history. It is stupid to resist *Schicksal*, fate itself. It is silly to be blamed for having made his modest contribution to Soviet history. Štejnberg did not understand that and died of exhaustion. Pinskij understood much better because until the early 1970's, he did not entirely ignore the Marxist laws. Woe to the defeated! But along with that, the Hegelian dialectics can explain everything and predict other developments. Those who are in power today will be thrown into an abyss tomorrow and those defeated yesterday will be revered as martyrs and great thinkers. There is a time for living and a time for dying. El'sberg might have considered that he had done his duty. If his former friends who survived cursed him instead of expressing their thanks to him, if he was insulted and beaten, if even he would be betrayed by the KGB, which is always prepared to withdraw its support from its faithful, but exposed agents, if he is forced to live in hiding, unable even to enjoy a dinner in the restaurant of his colleagues, writers and scholars - all of this is their fault, not his. He had been serving the cause and rightly foresaw the obituary in the leading newspapers, describing his outstanding impact upon literary criticism in the Soviet Union and throughout the whole world. If he had fears, it was only due to his being imperfect. The life circle was drawing to a close. The vicious circle was completed, the curtain of diabolical performance was coming down.

The army of informers, *provocateurs* and disinformers in Russia

surpasses all bounds of our imagination. In Solzhenitsyn's words, hardly anyone among his acquaintances and friends has eluded the KGB's attempt to enroll as a stool-pigeon anyone who is considered to be such a disgusting and despicable person that there is hardly anything worse than this phenomenon. Once these people are enrolled as stool-pigeons, their soul's peace is gone. They represent a very strange troop, indeed. On the one hand, their connection with the KGB determines their existence, paves their road to new promotions, and opens various doors for going abroad. On the other hand, their existence in this shape is a secret for everyone outside of their current contact in the KGB. They have their nicknames, they suspect that every other citizen of the Soviet Union finds himself or herself in the same position as they do themselves. But the last thing these stool-pigeons want is to be publicly rewarded for their hidden activities. They are never astonished that no one ever invites them to a convention or a conference of stool-pigeons. This would spell the end of their activities.

They know for sure that the KGB does not trust them and checks their fidelity by sending some other persons to the same "groups" they serve. If different information emerges from the same group or gathering, the stool-pigeons cannot expect anything good. They had been assured from the very beginning of their "career" that if they should be caught red-handed in a crime, misdemeanor or moral downfall, the same will be reopened, unfolded, divulged, publicized, and punished. These people should learn the art of stone-hard behavior, wickedness, and indifference in order to survive and preserve inner peace. One can say almost surely that these people have no idea about inner happiness. And one cannot even mention any elements of spiritual or religious life, for their minds and souls have been given to earthly troubles and intrigues.

So the world of non-Party people is wide and diverse, but most probably it does not have any real future. These people cannot organize any sizeable groups to discuss anything banned by the Party or undertake something forbidden because through its stool-pigeons and informers the KGB becomes really omniscient and ubiquitous. The non-Party majority of the country are the people who are being constantly attacked, harrassed, and sucked in by the Party gang. The moment these people understand how much they have been cheated in their life and deprived of their own happiness, the tiny Party clique will be unable to keep the power in its hands. In other words, these non-Party people must first be convinced that they are the happiest persons in the world who are given the opportunity to fulfill the most important mission in the history of humanity. The task of building this new classless society, Communism, is so lofty and inspiring that these persons can endure all kinds of deprivations, including intellectual and

psychological discomforts. And if these people do not agree to build this new society, which any sane mind can easily recognize as an impossible myth and nothing else but an illusory paradise on earth, only then should they be re-educated and eventually convinced of the benefits and advantages of co-operating in building this wonderful and alluring future. At the first stage, the authorities should be most patient, polite and congratulatory. By no means should they hurry to punish people while there is the slightest chance of satisfying a hesitant or misguided builder of Communism with a red carrot, at the sight of which each mouth can be made to water.

There are so many opportunities for non-Party people to become happy in such a society. They may plough the soil in a collective farm, drink cheap warm milk and sometimes booze. They can work as a janitor, metal craftsman, carpenter at a civilian or, if allowed, military plant and factory. They may marry, have children and with luck be provided with one or even two rooms for their growing family. There they will have a bathroom with a toilet, and warm water for washing themselves, taking baths and sometimes a shower. There are so many benefits and pleasures for them. They may go to see movies and sometimes go to the theater. If they live in Moscow, they can go to the Tretyakov Art Gallery any day they wish and to the Bolshoi Theater four or five times in their life. If they live outside of Moscow, they are allowed to visit it for a limited number of days and, of course, to visit the Lenin Mausoleum, to see the Kremlin and to view all the enormous beauty of the Soviet capital. As cultured and ideologically conscientious persons, they are asked to attend regularly, once or twice a week, those political seminars where they will be reassured of their happiness and if they have any questions about domestic or international life, these will be answered. They should be conscientious enough to ask reasonable questions lest they confuse the chairman of their enlightening and elucidating gatherings, even if they are slightly or unbearably boring. And naturally, it would be foolish, unreasonable and unsafe to ask questions like, "Why is there no butter in the city?" Good people will be rewarded and stimulated. They will be praised in newspapers and tightly censored television and radio programs. They will be given even better houses and sometimes Summer residences. They will be allowed to spend their time in the picturesque Crimea or in Soviet-occupied Latvia, in resort houses and sanatoria. Their books on the evolution of human beings from apes (not vice versa) will be published and popularized. They might even be allowed to visit some socialist countries like Hungary and Czechoslovakia if they do not arouse the impression that they are eager to know some details of the Soviet "fraternal aid" extended in 1956 and 1968. And they will be given even more than that if the authorities are sure that they will not defect or will

not talk too much about some negative aspects of Soviet society. For if they want to discourse about the society's vices and crimes, these people will often be offered, although against their will, a move in the opposite direction and a life in more natural and quite primitive conditions.

To sum up, if these people are ready to refute the slanderous capitalist propaganda about this society and behave moderately or in an exemplary fashion, then these Soviet people might be permitted to visit the West for a couple of weeks and for this unprecedented luxury, these people should pay the sum which is fitting - half of their yearly salary. But if these enormous privileges do not attract some Soviet people and they dare to disagree with the official policy of turning them into the happiest of human beings, only then will they be referred to another institution, which is much more direct, to the point, and immeasurably more practical.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Party and the KGB

The inherent and deep-seated principle of Soviet social life runs briefly as follows: "Unless you know, we shall teach you; unless you want, we shall force you." (In Russian: "Ne znaeš, naučim; ne choceš, zastavim.") This principle might have been established from the first night of the new October Revolution when Lev Trotsky eloquently announced that those disagreeing with the Bolsheviks and their style of leadership should be dumped as garbage. Disrespect towards those disagreeing with you is deeply concealed in the Marxist-Leninist teaching, because the end justifies the means used to achieve the final goal. In the heat of the post-revolutionary terror and struggle, Vladimir Lenin told Gorky that the succeeding generations would understand and exonerate the ruthlessness of the revolutionaries. If Lenin were otherwise blameless, this statement alone, with the accompanying police and Party behavior, would provide sufficient grounds for throwing him into hell fire. For by their wickedness and mercilessness, Lenin and his aides, awakened from the very start of the Revolution those satanic spirits in many ambitious Russians and unleashed such mighty streams of blood and violence, that the succeeding events and policy can be properly evaluated only in terms of the attempt to conceal the past crimes and to secure for a few thousand chosen mafia-style *parvenus* a safe and comfortable life.

Quite often we hear conversations about the differences between the Party and the KGB, under whatever name the latter functions. In 1953 Lavrentij Berija was blamed for his attempt to subjugate the Communist Party to state security which he headed. In 1982 the world was quite intrigued by the maneuvers of Yuri V. Andropov who had made his breakthrough from the chairmanship of the KGB to the leadership of the Communist Party. There is enough confusion with regards to the exact line of demarcation that runs between the Communist Party and the KGB and about the real relationships between them.

My modest approach to this complicated problem consists in simply stating the mere fact that after the victory of Lenin's Bolsheviks in the Petrograd Revolution of November 1917, the Communist Party and the KGB created the same, indivisible social body and are as inseperable as the two sides of a hand or the body and blood in a human body.[1]

The fundamental question which had bothered Lenin and his associates from the very beginning concerned the taking of power. How should the soil for grasping power be prepared? What ways and

means should be taken to seize power and keep it in the Party's hands? These were all different aspects of the same central problem. From the very beginning of their labors in building the Party and grasping power, Lenin and his aides were never disgusted by any rude and violent adjustments in the Marxist doctrine made in order to fit it to the rough Russian reality, to alienate those social-democratic leaders of the Russian revolutionary movement such as Georgij Plekhanov and Julij Martov who felt very uncomfortable with the way Lenin manipulated the truth along with the theory of the Party's principles. The policy of bank hold-ups and the expropriation tactics which led to the crucial scandals and quarrels with the West-European social-democratic leaders, the unscrupulous and operetta-like channels for acquiring huge sums of money through wealthy widows courted by Party-minded womenizers, the strange and highly suspicious means of receiving money from the Germans in the heat of the war between them and Russia, the history of the sealed train which was allowed by the German government to pass through Germany to Scandinavia after the start of the February Revolution, the incredible dealings with the Tsarist police through such agents as Roman Malinovskij and possibly Joseph Džugašvili as well - these are only several weird and undignified aspects of Lenin's Party policy prior to the revolution of 1917, which are utterly incompatible with the dignity, honor and real concern for the fate of the motherland and its people.

Immediately after the Revolution, various events occurred which are highly significant for gaining a better understanding of the Communist Party's policy. Lenin and his comrades-in-arms were always of the opinion that the French Revolution of 1789 failed because its leaders refrained from using terror with full effect. Even Maxim Gorky, Lenin's close friend, supporter of the Bolsheviks for many years and a person of flexible thoughts and evaluations, was enraged by Lenin's policy of enflaming the common Russian populace with its brutal passions and blood-thirsty instincts. Tsar Nikolay II, his wife and five children were most brutally executed by Party-supported villains. Leading statesmen of the previous regime were shot without trial. Hundreds of thousands of people were wickedly tortured and killed throughout the country by the Party-appointed gangs of executioners. The stories of these executions will forever remain in the chronicles of Russian history. Former Russian generals and military specialists were recruited to serve the Red Army under the threat that their wives and children would be killed as hostages if they would not agree to co-operate with the Soviet system. In the words of Pitrim Sorokin, during the curfew hours in Petrograd, the silence of the city was broken by the drunken swearing of red sailors, the revolutionary heroes, who were returning from their orgies in the company of eleven-

and twelve-year-old girls living in an orphanage located in the same house where Sorokin lived.

The Legislative Assembly elected by the Russian people was dispersed in 1918 by Lenin's decree. The Kronstadt mutiny was suppressed in blood. Many riots of workers and peasants were immediately and ruthlessly strangled by the government which claimed to represent the toiling masses. All non-government newspapers and journals with wide readership were banned. Literary life, publishing houses, theaters and all production of movies were put under strict control. Persecution and terror against the Russian Orthodox Church, various religious denominations and sects reached its peak in the first months of the new regime and never actually subsided until recently. All free expression of independent thought was strictly prohibited. All parties except for the Bolshevik Party were banned and persecuted, including the party of the Mensheviks and left-socialist revolutionaries which to some extent supported the Bolsheviks in the initial period of the new regime. Unprecedented terror was spread all over the country. Hundreds of thousands were arrested without any warrant. Scholars and scientists were supported by the state if they agreed to co-operate with it. Uniform thought was installed almost immediately, although it continued to be skillfully revised and adapted year after year. Leading intellectuals of Russia who remained in the country in spite of the mass exodus of educated people were forced to leave the country for otherwise they had to embark upon the road of martyrdom or painful transformation of their personality.

In Lenin evil was concentrated perhaps to a greater extent than even in Stalin. Stalin was an uneducated brute who had inherited the machine created and put into action by Lenin. His actions were much more hypocritical and double-minded, but at the same time they were more plain and even naked. He continued to weave the myth of the Party, the state and its leader, but whoever reads the materials connected with his life is struck by his extreme and total cynicism. To his teenage daughter, who was struck dumb by her father's dirty jokes in the presence of other "Party leaders" at the table, Stalin, loaded with wine and food, griningly explained: "Lead us, we, all of us, follow you!" To the interrogators of the KGB who found their tortures insufficient to break the wills of their victims, Stalin stated that no human beings could resist under the weight of the state and repeatedly ordered which tortures exactly were to be made and told them very frankly that unless they extracted the confessions they would lose their own heads.

Stalin would have been unable to carry on the gigantic task started by Lenin. Being of relatively noble descent, Lenin had enough education and intellect to analyze step after step the political, economic

and intellectual structure of the Tsarist regime in order to realise his only goal based on his *idée fixe*: to destroy the imperial and bourgeois regime. With his knowledge of foreign languages, world history, and Russian literature, he could exert a favorable impression on many educated and intelligent persons who could not live without the thought of grinding their "beloved" Russia into powder and ashes. Gorky was right when he wrote that Lenin's thought was permanently directed like a needle on a compass towards the class struggle. In that sense, all members of the Party founded by Lenin are characterized by the same trait. Personally Lenin was neither highly ambitious nor ruthless. Unlike Stalin he needed neither vodka nor pornography. Lenin was Russian civilization's flower pollinated by the highly venomous Marxist ideas and the Western atheistic enlightenment.

Everything in his life was maximally simple and extremely mystical. Being an atheist and God-blasphemer, Lenin was in some sense religious, shrewd and wise, like a diabolical serpent. He served as a weapon for external forces. At the same time, the cornerstones and facets of his theoretical and practical activities before, during, and after the Revolution, undoubtedly reflect in him the greatest potential of intellect, energy and efficiency. He attracted persons of various temperaments and backgrounds to himself. As he was himself a typical bourgeois intellectual, he was able to overlook the extremes in the behavior of his subordinates although he was slightly and sometimes kind-heartedly amused by that. There were periods before the Revolution when he was losing hope for radical changes in Russia. During the Revolution itself, there were naturally many moments when he despaired of the fate of the state he headed. But during both of these stages he was at the peak of his abilities and when his victory was won beyond any expectations, all of Russia was in his hands. Only then did the crisis come and Lenin, already paralyzed and helpless, saw with his own eyes that the country was in great danger. The Party he led for so many years was victorious and the state security police (the Cheka, GPU or OGPU in succeeding stages) had done its best to undermine, disarm, disinform and terrorize the enemies of the young state. But Lenin's role was completed and he really did not know how to proceed further. Under the enormous burden of responsibility, tragedies of his own intelligentsia and disasters throughout the country, he could not invent any remedy besides the NEP, which was a return to the previous economic and cultural principles.

Lenin was blind and horrified while he lay dying. He did not want Stalin to be his successor, though he did not see other any reliable successors. Perhaps the greatest discovery made by Lenin was the stability and "conservative" nature of human psychology. Whatever great achievements had been gained by Lenin, it is possible that he

might not have thought of changing the psychology of human beings by violence and force. He could take power by force and blood, but he was, to a great extent, helpless to proceed further. However, the laws of history "discovered" by the Marxists presupposed the appearance of great leaders and heroes at the ripe and mature times of emergency. The work of the victor in the Revolution was in some way very small when compared to the giant task undertaken by Stalin. Stalin had planned to create an enormous mighty "socialist" Russia, the third Rome, and he made up his mind to change not so much the country as the people. This was the new goal he set for the country: to change the psychology of human beings who were absolutely unprepared for the better life which Communism promised.

Undoubtedly, Stalin was an ideological bandit and gangster, the worst type of 'godfather' in the Communist Party mafia. Khrushchev must have lied at the 20th Party Congress when he said that Stalin thought that the Soviet collective farmers lived as prosperously as in the film "The Cuban Cossacks". Better than anyone else, Stalin knew the real situation in the Soviet villages and after witnessing the fate of millions of artificial-starvation victims in the Ukraine, he had no wish to know more about that life. Soviet workers were generously supplied with vodka. Peasants were threatened with starvation, exile to Siberia and prison camps unless they worked at collective farm fields without any wages, as was the case with the traditional *barščina*. The intelligentsia was forced to chew the same pseudo-intellectual cud which began and ended with eulogies to the genius of Stalin. Party members were assured that they would pay with their lives for a single deviation from the Party line prescribed by Stalin. Millions of well-paid secret police officials, functionaries and stool-pigeons worked tirelessly during the day to eavesdrop on what was said by the happy builders of Communism in order to provoke the wrong words or actions which would be immediately punished by the authorities and provide a memorable lesson for all those who would like to imitate the wrong-doers. During the same time the KGB troops perpetuated the most intimidating punitive system, unprecedented in the history of humanity.

All this was not only known to Stalin, but he personally initiated, introduced and established this system of torture and violence. Many times he threatened his aides that they would pay with their heads if they fail to extort the necessary "confessions".[2] Stalin spent his youth in the realm of the Russian Orthodox Church and knew the Christian Church's worst past, including the inquisition and some Jesuit tactics. His own oriental past and his brilliant acquaintance with the Caucasian, Turkish, Persian and Central Asian history of treating prisoners played a definite role in determining his behavior towards his enemies and ideological adversaries.

Russia paid too high a price for conquering the Caucasus, not to mention other areas, from which such prominent personalities like Feliks Džeržinskij, Leon Trotsky and many others had come to organize the better social system of government and human co-operation. But with Stalin-Džugašvili, who first used Jagoda, then his devoted friend Ežov and then his compatriot Lavrentij Berija, the state security police was headed by persons who were unparallelled in following and imitating the cruelest features of their boss.

In Stalin's time, the state secret police functioned like evil spirits in fairy-tales: they were hidden and worked by night. However, the Soviet people saw the image of Aladdin's "kind uncle" and under those devilish circumstances, rare were the people who could suspect the enormous skill with which Stalin played his double role. Even such a wise man as Mikhail Bulgakov depicted in Voland's gang some features of Stalin and his entourage from a relatively kind and generous standpoint. The gang was, of course, devilish and turned some creatures into witches, but they still persecuted evil, ignorance and greed.

If the country in the time of Lenin was led by him and the Party in close co-operation with the "organs", then under Stalin its real master was Stalin himself, supported by his invisible and at the same time omniscient and ubiquitous state security police. The Party was downgraded and this partially explains the unprecedented slaughter among the Party members, which took place during Stalin's reign. Furthermore, numerous facts showed that the main targets of Stalin's persecutions were exactly these same Party members. Perhaps, in Stalin's perception, they had the wrong idea concerning the relationships between the Party and the "organs".

But the most essential goal of Stalin's rule, based on the state security police, was to transform the mentality of those millions of people who were still unprepared for building Communism. Stalin was well aware that he was playing a foul game with the whole nation and the world, but he obviously enjoyed it. The nature of Stalinism was full of contempt for human nature. Even the Grand Inquisitor was too mild and lenient towards his people and his adversaries. Dostoevsky wrote about these things from a theoretical point of view, while Stalin was engaged over his head in the harsh reality of life. How could one discuss Communism after the bandit-like looting of the peasants, the persecution of the Church and all religious sects and denominations, immediately after the outbreak of the Revolution? How could millions of those peasants whose diligent and thrifty parents were "dekulakized" (in other words deprived of their property, houses and land) and sent away to Siberia to face an inevitable death be expected to work as earnestly? What Communism could be built by millions of "orphans"

whose Party-carded fathers and mothers had been brutally tortured, decimated, made to wade knee-deep in blood, guillotined, strangled, raped, imprisoned for decades and turned into other beings or non-beings at all? What Communism could be built by the millions of those whose fathers lost their lives in World War Two because of Stalin's blind unwillingness to listen to his subordinates and his cruelty in sending millions of young people to be killed by the point-blank fire of the enemy? If up to twenty million of the best people of Russia were incarcerated simultaneously in Stalin's prison camps, what Communism could be built by their relatives who survived outside of the prison-camp walls and helped them from their meager resources, all the while expecting new persecutions against good people after World War Two? What Communism could one discuss during permanent anti-Semitic, anti-Crimean Tartar, anti-German and anti-Caucasian persecutions launched in full breadth at the end of the exhausting World War Two, and throughout all the following years until the greatest leader of all countries and nations disappeared? It was clear to millions and millions that one had to be naive and simple-minded to believe in the possibility of Communism's triumph in the country.

Stalin was by no means a fool to believe that the bleeding country, exhausted by his mass executions was going to build Communism. After the end of the World War Two, he did not dare show up among the people who were supposed to revere him and love him as if he were God. Aleksandr Orlov wrote that even in the 1930's Stalin punished very severely his bodyguards, who created an independent army always on full alert, if somebody met him in the Kremlin corridors unexpectedly. Stalin saw a potential assassin in each person he incidentally met. It was really funny and absurd to imagine that these potential assassins of their leader would be earnestly engaged in Communism-building. Stalin himself knew only too well why so many people wanted to assassinate him, "their father and teacher".

There was only one way for him to deal with people: to frighten and terrorize them to an extent unthinkable in the history of the human race, to turn human nature upside down and topsy-turvy, to create around them a life in which they would vividly see a sufficient number of persons, sharing their own thoughts and feelings, thrown into prisons and oblivion. These people would be shown the lines along which they must think, speak and behave if they wished to survive physically. They would have to learn these rules and regulations not by reading them somewhere, but because they understood them subconsciously.

The security police had many functions. When people were arrested and jailed, they were to be treated in such a way that they would never wish to find themselves in such places of incarceration for

a second time. The inmates of prison camps or prisons should have no chance of leaving their cells or barracks and in no way should they inform people outside about the real conditions there. Myths should be perpetuated. Persecutions should be real and impressive. If somehow a few people were released from prisons, they should know that they owe their freedom to Stalin personally. They should not disclose anything connected with their life inside and by their success "at large", they should laud Stalin and his Party *ad majorem Gloriam Dei* and *Allah Akbar*. But before these people are arrested and incarcerated, their behavior should be observed on all levels so that one may discern whether it reflects their actions or words.

The state security police has to work in such a way that people should not dare undertake any actions against the government. This means, of course, that unauthorized people are not allowed to have any access to weapons and arms. Their actions should be forestalled by a network of state security agents who will observe each person and eavesdrop on what they are saying during the meetings which they consider highly confidential. People should be brought to confide in each other to the degree of divulging their thoughts and, as a result, be arrested. But people should not trust each other as far as their actions are concerned. They should keep the idea in mind that as soon as they try to implement some of their ideas, they will immediately fail. The most urgent order of Stalin was not to obstruct such actions once they began, but to frustrate them at the level of thought. It was only natural to persecute people for saying dangerous things, but this was not sufficient for Stalin. People were supposed to reject any possibility of even thinking freely. Of course, there was no free stream of information for them and they had no chance of knowing what was going on in the world. But even if they had a partial access to the chips of independent and true information, they had to be discouraged with regards to their independent thinking. To achieve that, Stalin created another complicated system where people of merit - academicians and prominent writers, scientists and scholars - lied shamelessly so that everyone considered that manner of life and speaking only natural. If Stalin had known the content of Zamyatin's *We*, Orwell's *1984* and some other works, he would have only smiled. He had built a world which was no less efficient. The majority of people were afraid to think, to speak, to act. They were ready to sacrifice the lives of their own friends in order to preserve their own or that of their kin. Being frightened to death, these people were ready to testify to anything demanded from them and, of course, they were ready to believe that the nonsense-based society they were living in was going to turn into Communism by some magic from the human-god they had been trained to worship.

With Stalin's death and Khrushchev's ascent to power, a crucial

reappraisal of the relationships between the Party and the KGB took place. Berija and his close aides were arrested and executed, many KGB generals and officers were demoted, thousands of agents were fired from the state security police and a radically new contingent of workers was recruited by the KGB with the hope that they would behave differently than those under Jagoda, Ežov and Berija. With the secret speech of Nikita Khrushchev at the 20th Party Congress the image of the KGB endured a number of obvious setbacks. Many people were confirmed in their suspicions that the KGB was simply an army of cut-throats or murderers, and the last thing they had expected was to hear confirmation from the mouth of Russia's first Party man.

Most probably, Khrushchev did not entirely understand what he was doing and his subordinates were patiently waiting for him to break his neck by his own actions and speeches. For too many people inside and outside of Russia it was obvious that Khrushchev's anti-Stalinist campaign was absolutely suicidal for the governing Party body and that any further disclosures of the KGB atrocities and brutalities could have had fatal consequences for the Party and the "proletarian" state. At some earlier stage, Khrushchev understood the danger of his anti-KGB line and made haste slowly. Several times he reversed his own policy, but the 20th Congress announcement interwoven with the 22nd Party Congress decisions sounded for many too much like a thunderbolt and, of course, these decisions reflected the temperament of Khrushchev who had been spoilt, although not entirely, by the Party dictatorship. In Winston Churchill's words, he really wanted to jump over the gap with two attempts. Khrushchev could not please the KGB with his controversial suggestions and policy towards the intelligentsia, and it was mainly the KGB, through the figures of Michail Suslov, Aleksandr Šelepin and Vladimir Semičastnij who accomplished the *coup d'état* in 1964. The relatively short period during which the state security experienced a kind of disarray because of the Party leader's inconsistent policy was over. After that time the state security returned to having full trust in the Party leadership.

Leonid Brezhnev's eighteen-year retention of power was a gradual yielding to the state security's interests. After a short period of less than three years, Brezhnev and his associates found a proper person to head the KGB: Yuri Andropov. Initially, Andropov was a second-rate Party official who had no serious chance to compete with other serious pretenders for the General Secretary's regalia. However, with every year, it became increasingly clear that Brezhnev had no wish to repeat his predecessor's errors as far as the relationships between the Party and the KGB were concerned.

Step by step, under the pressure of the KGB, Brezhnev gave up the positions held by Khrushchev, his close aides and himself. The claims

of the KGB to defending the security and the integrity of the state cannot be repudiated. Anyone who raises his voice to repudiate these claims as unfounded risks his own security, position and freedom. Brezhnev's history seems to show in some detail how the Party leader becomes entangled inch by inch in the threads of a spider's web. In the first years of his tenure in the Soviet Union an unprecedented freedom could be observed. *Novyj mir* published challenging stories and novels. Trofim Lysenko was toppled with his heralds and all the balderdash of his epoch-making discoveries. The intelligentsia raised its own head, discussing vital issues, reciting poetry, and dreaming of the approaching liberty. However, a number of Soviet freethinkers were arrested and put on trial to remind their kind to keep a low profile.

Brezhnev agreed with the KGB tactic of isolating a large group of ringleaders of various troublemakers, without disturbing the peace and creative activities of relatively quiet people who were not involved in the open protest. Yuri Andropov, through his associates, informed the world that the measures undertaken against these few vocal people were aimed at ploughing the soil for democracy in Russia.

Since the early 1970's, Brezhnev was progressively losing control over events in the country and abroad. A central group of dissidents was isolated by emprisonment, confinement in mental hospitals, blacklisting, exile to Siberia and then by enforced emigration and deportation. Soviet foreign policy became more aggressive and sophisticated under the umbrella of the fool's paradise-like détente and close co-operation with such distinguished Western intellectuals as Henry Kissinger.

With the help of the KGB, Brezhnev kept on getting rid of his rivals at the top of the Party, all the while remaining oblivious to Andropov's tactics which were paving the road for the latter's unhindered coming to power. Brezhnev met President Ford in Vladivostok, signed the Helsinki agreement, continued to strengthen his reputation as a peacemaker, and embraced and kissed President Jimmy Carter to the delight of millions. In the meanwhile, the KGB shifted gears and started to grab hundreds of those who disagreed with the Kremlin's policy and fought to warn the West about it. By this time, the KGB broke a number of prominent Russian freedom-fighters and repeatedly forced them to make false statements on TV screens. The KGB permeated the remaining thinned rows of the independent Russians with their own stool-pigeons. KGB agents followed on the heels of these brave people; they were beating them bloody, setting their houses and unofficial art galleries on fire, imposing heart attacks on their victims during several interrogations at the KGB offices (not without the assistance of mysterious devices), openly killing a number of prominent intellectuals in order to teach a lesson to those who were more timid and

less vocal.

The KGB pursued its policy of grasping new areas of the world and the army accelerated its nuclear race, while the West initiated a voluntary unilateral freeze and supplied the "peace-loving" Soviets with grain, low-interest credits, modern technology and computers, built them a Kama truck plant, arranged scientific and scholarly exchanges - all with the result that Soviet spies got an access to the highly classified information in the West while some rare Western humanitarians were given permission to page through a few specially checked and prepared archival materials kept under the aegis of the KGB. South Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Nicaragua fell one after another into the hands of the Soviets, enlarging thus the "All-World Communist Commonwealth". Perhaps all these events could have been overlooked by "progressive public opinion" if the Soviets had calculated more carefully their blunt invasion of Afghanistan, which became almost inevitable after the incredible success of the KGB in Iran. To their troubles in Afghanistan (apparently over-estimated by the Western media which could predict for the Soviets nothing differing from another Vietnam for the Americans), authentic worries about Polish Solidarity were added. Although even at this stage it seems relatively difficult to foresee the results of the clash between the Soviet-supported military and state security junta on the one side, and the thirty-six million Polish people headed by Lech Walesa and the Roman Pontiff, on the other, one cannot express too much optimism at the events going on in Poland.

Nonetheless, Leonid Brezhnev grew to become more and more a nominal figure, against the background of these crucial and threatening events and policies which could be observed and controlled only by the apparatus of the KGB. With all the obvious indications and the panorama of Soviet aggressions it became enormously difficult even for such an absent-minded and senile a figure as Leonid Brezhnev was in his last years, to pose as a peace-loving father and charity-spreading Santa Claus, sitting on the Kremlin Olympus. Brezhnev became absolutely outdated and unfit for the everyday Party routine which demanded a leader with real virtuosity in double-mindedness, eloquent public hypocrisy, firm and unwavering cruelty, as well as a sober and pragmatic strategy. It was too late for Brezhnev to notice that the KGB schemes, which had begun by undermining vocal intellectuals and proceeded with splendid victories on the internatinal stage, ended by restoring a good number of traits and customs from the Stalin era. What had been really overlooked by Brezhnev and discovered by him only at the regrettable and irreversible late stage of his career and life, was Andropov's scheme to remove Brezhnev himself from his office and influence while the latter was still alive and allegedly kept on

handling the reins of the Kremlin chariot. Andropov had been undermining the position of Brezhnev's cronies, family members and close associates for years and nothing could stop him in his pursuit of position number one in the country.

With Andropov's ascent to power, the fact that had been concealed for so many decades became an open secret: the Party and the state security police are one and the same unity. In the full sense of the expression "I dance with the one who dines with me", the Party cannot any longer ignore the fact that the KGB is the factual content of the Party's ideology and practice. Long ago, the Communists together with Marx and Engels exclaimed that "the Communists consider it despicable to conceal their views and intentions. They announce it publicly that their goals might be fulfilled only through the violent overthrow of the whole existing social system". Too much water has flowed under the bridge since that time. When the Communist goals were announced so openly, then naturally, there were persons at the top of the Party structure who were enriched with the knowledge of Hegel and Marx and their ties with the secret police could be hidden and camouflaged. Nowadays, the policy of the Communist Kremlin is so complex, intricate and manifold that the Party cannot afford another leader like Khrushchev or Brezhnev who could not keep abreast of what is going on in the womb of their own system and in the headquarters of the secret police. On the other hand, it is only the top-cop of the system who has the power, knowledge and skill to bring together all the ropes of the sailing boat. And it is a trifle for him to make a public speech, to take in another prominent politician visiting their country and to throw a good amount of dust into the eyes of the remaining naive people by having invited to the country an eleven-year-old girl from Maine in order to show her the beauty of accomplished socialism.

Though the Party has always tried to conceal the activities of its "organs", this eventually became impossible. The "organs" constitute the real essence of the Party. Without the "organs" the Party would have been unable to survive even a few weeks. From this point of view, Voinović was not correct when he wrote in his otherwise splendid satire about the disappearance of the "organs" and added that life in the region went on unchanged. The disappearance of the "organs" could only mean that the Soviet system would cease to exist as well. The coming to power of Andropov and Gorbachev might have meant a radically new stage in the history of the Russian Party. Simultaneously, it might have signalled the highest triumph of the KGB and at the same time its end, the end of the Party interwoven with the KGB. It is absolutely impossible to predict at this stage how long this agonizing end will continue. Of course, these twins, the Party and the

KGB, have at their disposal the means to exterminate the human race along with themselves. Most probably, they will never do this. To do so, one needs at least a strong will and the resolution to settle accounts with this world. But these people do not believe in the other world and naturally they try to postpone their visit to the other world which they may envision only as a hell. The other possibility for the Communist leaders is to continue their expansion outside their empire. This is not easy to interpret, but it seems that the capacity of the Communist empire for expansion at the expense of the capitalist countries has been exhausted. Any new country captured by the Soviets and ignored by the West inevitably heralds an approaching world disaster. There is still some hope that Western leaders will become more sensitive and courageous in their duty to defend the rights of our children against the attempts of the Soviets to grab the rest of the world. In addition, the resources of the Soviet Union itself are very limited; one cannot rely endlessly on the energy of fools and moral scoundrels.

The integration of the Party and the KGB is complete to the degree that the Party is now the KGB itself. One should not forget that the Party leaders have turned their watchdogs, the KGB officials and agents, into robots and scum who could be beheaded and exterminated any day and any time. Vladimov described this phenomenon in his splendid novel *The Faithful Russian.* Regrettably, the capitalist world is far from being the world described by the original Marxist theory even though it is not an ideal world at all. The worst thing about it is that people are too much concerned about their everyday pleasures and desires without seeing the tragedies of tomorrow. But with all the sad predictions and premonitions, there is still a definite attitude towards this problem on the side of the silent majority in the West.

Ultimately, one should say that the nearest future of the Communist Party is the future of the KGB. The Party component will decrease, while the KGB component will increase.

Gorbachev's much-advertized *perestrojka* and *glasnost'* have failed thus far to bring any serious systemic changes into the above-described structure. The system finds itself for the time being in a profound multi-dimensional crisis; but, at this stage - after the ouster of Boris El'cyn in November 1987 - it is almost impossible to foresee the developments that might occur in the months to come.

CHAPTER NINE

The Party as a Myth

The Communist Party is first of all an anti-Church institution and here we find a number of striking contrasts and parallels. This is of special interest to us for the simple reason that from the very beginning the Communist Party was very much against the Church and against religious faith in general. We have written about this phenomenon above and now we can only mention that the founders of the Communist doctrine had special reasons to hate the Church and demand that their followers give up any association with it and their religion.

There are today a great number of religious people, including Roman Catholics, who strive to share their faith while adhering to the Marxist doctrine. Of course, one can unite various things and find some pleasure in that. Somehow for an ordinary and disciplined mind, Marxism and Christianity are incompatible for they are based on absolutely diverse cornerstones. The attitude of the Communist Party and its members has varied slightly throughout the fourteen decades which have passed since the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*. But in general it was always rather negative. Communist leaders were especially indignant about "fideism", "*popovščina*", *etc.*, for various reasons. The Communists had no interest at all in the other world and its mystery. After all we know about them, one can only guess why they were characterized by this attitude. Essentially they were interested in power, in pursuing their ambitions and in making other people happy or unhappy. They wanted to overthrow the existing authorities and to expropriate the well-to-do classes and their property. The *Vorgeschichte* (pre-history) was over. The new era had started. There were new opportunities, new possibilities radically to change human life and human nature everywhere. If necessary, this was to be done by force, by violence, by fire, by cheating and if these methods were not so good initially, then history - our final judge - would forgive and restore justice.

From the very beginning there essentially existed the deepest contempt towards human nature. Human beings are good and deserve to be happy but they are stupid and callous, and that is why the Communists, the chosen people, should drag them to the state of happiness by any means. If some resist, they should be "re-educated" or just killed. Theory justifies these actions. These people should not have any doubts about their theory. Those who cherish doubts, who are hesitant about the proper ways to eliminate evil in the world by

violence are not reliable and should be put aside from the highway of Communist development and construction. After the Revolution, many convinced Communists had a good chance to understand that our life is too complex to be renovated with one blow. These may remain in the Party, but they will not be sufficiently aggressive to attack the lazy and indecisive. Never mind! In the same Party there will always be found plenty of those who would not give a damn about joining the current crusade against intellectuals, Jews, all kinds of Westerners and those who revere manners and views incompatible with those shared by Communists.

Furthermore, up to the present, persons in the Soviet Union who are devoted to faith, religious dogmas and the worship of God and Jesus Christ, are officially proclaimed to be insane. This is a good way to get rid of your ideological opponents: by proclaiming them to be mad and crazy. Undoubtedly, when the people making these proclamations keep power in their hands, such an attitude is extremely dangerous for the various sides involved. Cruelty, fanaticism, persecutions, harassment against faith and dissident views - all these are only a prelude to the rivers of blood which eventually pour forth as a result of such an attitude.

However, at this stage of our consideration it is much more relevant to consider the dangerous trend of mind in the Communists themselves. What is their own inner universe like when the greatest phenomenon of spirit and culture inherent to the Judaeo-Christian heritage is qualified as non-existent or in a highly negative manner? The revelations of God to the patriarchs and prophets are either considered to be non-existent, or mocked, or treated in both ways simultaneously. These people exclude from their life those ways and channels through which a certain part of humanity, and not at all its worst part, achieved peace of soul, gained new vision of the spiritual realm, and unfolded new mysteries of human life. How will these people achieve a semblance of serenity and light in their soul? Are they not a constant prey to their own feelings of pride and envy, ambition and greed, gluttony and lust? How do they survive amidst their fears and anxieties? Was not Lenin one example of such a faithless life? Was not Stalin another horrible example of a man with these predispositions although Stalin seems to have been an even more complicated person from a religious point of view?

Is it not because of this that the faces of Communists are so much alike on the one hand and impenetrable, stone-like, gloomy and unradiating on the other? Naturally, such a man, if he lives long enough, presents a rather unique example of survival against the traditional stream of mankind. But in my own many years of experience, I found that with few exceptions, these people do not ultimately justify our expectations and leave a chill and disappointment in our hearts.

Their negative attitude towards the Church and the faith might be accounted for by various reasons including the negative sides of the existing Churches and religious people themselves. It might be explained by their specific temperament which does not need any serious religious experience or by their up-bringing which has maimed their character and thwarted their conscience. It might be explained by a one-sided interpretation of religious history where only the regrettable sides and facts are emphasized and exaggerated. These people could have themselves been victims of various religious fanatics.

In this extraordinarily vast subject, we will take only one narrow segment and try to show that the Communist *Weltanschauung* is entirely incompatible with the cornerstone of religious doctrine such as that of Judaeo-Christianity. None of the Ten Commandments, mandatory for a Jew and a Christian, can be respected by a Party member.

Why should they respect the first commandment: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage"? If the years of slavery in Egypt have some meaning for them as they strive to liberate themselves from the yoke of capitalist exploitation, they consider it an opium to rely on any supernatural assistance in this endeavor and cannot be grateful to anybody for that long-past adventure which constitutes for them nothing more than another mythical story like those about the universal flood and the story about the fall of Adam and Eve in the primeval paradise. "You shall have no other gods before me" should be ignored by Communists from the very beginning for many reasons including the one that they should revere their own Party, its doctrine and their current leader more than the Lord who does not even exist for them. Is not the cult of Lenin, with its Mecca-Mausoleum by the Kremlin wall, a shame for any reasonable person? For these people, too many other gods exist including the god of their own theory, the god of their tortured pride and ambition, the god of nationalism and of the country they were born in, the god of the proletariat which should liberate the class from oppression and exploitation by the bourgeoisie. There is even the god of enmity and hatred towards their enemies and adversaries who should be exterminated by all means.

"You shall not make for yourselves a graven image or any likeness of anything that is in Heaven above or that is on the earth beneath, of that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments". The Communists, perhaps, will not be seriously intimidated by this commandment and its threats. The turmoil and suffering of the children and grandchildren of those revolu-

tionaries who had killed the Tsar and his family, exterminated millions and millions of innocent people including clergymen, laymen, religious and irreligious persons, will rarely think about this commandment. And if they wish to know about it, where will they find the Bible which the authorities publicly curse, burn and ban? How can one take this commandment seriously after millions of portraits of Lenin survived through decades in spite of Stalin's hate for him and the disregard of his followers for many of his principles, or even after the cult of Khrushchev and Brezhnev who had been almost forgotten and thrown into the river of oblivion on the day of their deaths only to make way for a new cult of Yuri Andropov, Konstantin Chernenko, despite their frail health and the feeling that they were not going to last too long?

"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain." As far as this commandment is concerned, the Communists have gone so far that only God knows where they will stop. Not only do they use the name of God in vain and write the word "God" itself without any initial capital, but they utter blasphemy concerning Him whenever and wherever they find this possible and expedient. They are not ashamed or frightened to announce that God is non-existent on the one hand and on the other hand they blame Him and religious people for many troubles over the course of history, invariably taking sides with the irreligious and God-defying people. The commandment: "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain" is not even taken into account by them and trespassed each day so many times that they are incapable of keeping track of it.

"Observe the sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God." Until Stalin's death, with its six-day working week, there was hardly any possibility for anybody in Russia to observe the sabbath if they wanted to do so. The authorities made things as complicated and filled with as many hurdles as possible. Throughout the 1920's and 1930's they manipulated and restructured the working week as much as possible. Instead of having seven-day weeks they experimented with weeks of five and six days and for millions of workers there was no chance to observe the seventh day. So far as they themselves were concerned, the Party members never actually took care of these matters, themselves working on the seventh day of the week and forcing others to work regardless of whether they were Jewish, Christian, Moslem, *etc.* If for many religious persons in Russia this question appeared highly redundant, what could one say about Party members and the leading personalities of the country?

"Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God commanded you." It is true that Lenin behaved as an obedient, respect-

ful son towards his mother and the first thing he did after returning from his exile to Russia was to visit the cemetery where his mother was buried. One should not say anything like this about Joseph Stalin who did not even go to bury his mother in Georgia in 1936. His relationships with his mother were far from being excellent and worthy of imitation. Stalin's attitude towards his own father whom he wanted even to stab at some stage for having insulted his mother or for something else, is not described in his Soviet biographies. In the 1930's and thereafter, the Party press, and no other has existed in Russia since that time, lauded to the sky as a national hero Pavlik Morozov who had betrayed his father to the state security police for having concealed grain for the family from the looting Party authorities. The roles of father and mother do not really matter when the Communist Party demands and orders its adherents and followers to act in the name of Communist principles. It was considered almost normal in the 1930's for sons and daughters to reject their arrested and slain fathers and mothers and, as we saw in the case of Professor Neupokoeva, demand capital punishment, along with other blood-thirsty youths, for their own innocent fathers or mothers.

"You shall not murder" must be considered a funny and curious commandment for millions of those who have been trained in the theory that "if the enemy does not give up, he should be exterminated". Murder of all those who do not get along with the line of the current leader has ever been considered a trifle, which should not bother the conscience. At the same time, compassion for the arrested and the slain was treated as a crime.

"You shall not commit adultery" is the next commandment. In the last years of Stalin's reign, the rules of behavior became quite tough. But in the 1920's and 1930's, as well as after Stalin's death, few people cared about this business unless the Party bodies wanted to punish those who deviated from the official line. The Party wanted to destroy the family as a social unit. Then, when the family became almost nil as a Christian structure, they wanted to restore it along with blood ties and tribal mentality in order to use it for their own benefit. For the leading Party leaders, this commandment could only be an object of laughter.

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." Thousands of the GPU and NKVD interrogators and torturers could only cynically grin at such advice. The entire country has been covered by the spider's web of mutual slander and denunciation. The majority of people supported by the Party and the KGB officials and instructions forgot what was the precise meaning of this commandment.

"You shall not covet your neighbor's wife; and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field or his manservant or his maidservant,

his ox or his ass or anything that is your neighbor's." The theory of Communism justifies those who embark upon the road of class robbery and expropriation. The words about "not coveting your neighbor's wife" falls upon the deaf ears of those who had been taught to praise the future of the common sharing of wives, according to Karl Marx' and Frederick Engels' ground-laying ideas.

In other words, all Ten Commandments have been brutally suppressed, broken, ignored and mocked. Communists cannot take the religious prescriptions in any serious sense or note. For progressive-minded members of the Communist Party, religion became a matter of the irreversible and irretrievable past.

The anti-religious feelings and convictions of Communists, especially at the initial stage of their emergence, prove various things about the peculiar direction of modern thinking. To some extent, it shows the validity of Hegel's dialectical law of negation of negation. One cannot exclude that at some stage the Communists were intellectually more advanced and smarter than those for whom religion was the shield by which they defended themselves from the interference of outside life. The Communists were ready for a while to explain the various phenomena of social life which remained untouched for decades, if not for centuries. But, at the same time, their attitudes obviously show that the Communists threw the baby out with the bath water. Arthur Koestler wrote about this in his novel *Darkness at Noon*, where he described the intellectual pangs of Rubashov and noticed that pure rational feeling brought him to a dead end.

What is strange and at the same time highly logical in the light of the same dialectical law is that the Communist Party, both before it came to power and especially after that, resembles so much the Church and its structure.

One of the greatest strengths of the Communist Party and its adepts consists in the fact that they were persecuted and subject to discrimination before they came to power. The history of the Bolsheviks prior to the February Revolution of 1917 in Russia is really rather moving. As a rule, they lived in permanent harassment, in poverty, and quite often jailed. Their abilities to publish freely their literature were rather restricted, although never eliminated entirely and incomparably much more advantageous than the situation of those intellectuals in Russia whom the world nicknamed the "dissidents". These Bolsheviks were given an epithet *tverdokamennyj* (hard-stoned), which really corresponded to their nature. They lived an intellectual life that naturally concentrated on the negative aspects of Russian life before the Revolution. They found the life around them unbearable and meaningless unless it was to be replaced by the entirely different society which was supposed to bring a new spirit, new inspiration, and new air

to breathe.

They were not exactly martyrs. They rather reminded one of predators and jackals who longed for change in society. The succeeding twenty years after the Revolution revealed their abilities and blindness, although they appeared much better and even more humane than their murderers and successors. Their life-style, while they were in prison, in exile in Siberia or abroad cannot be compared with the life of the present-day prisoners who have no money from the Government, are compelled to carry out the work of slaves and reside under humiliating conditions with professional criminals trained in humiliating and abusing the political prisoners. These latter inmates are not allowed to see their relatives or friends, or to receive any help from the outside. They are enormously restricted in their correspondence, *etc.* But due to various factors, including the prestige of Tsardom in the eyes of the intellectuals, the instability of the society in general, the immaturity of the intelligentsia and the potential wildness and blindness of the lower classes, those repressed Russian Bolsheviks attracted a great deal of sympathy on the part of the people. Great artists like Repin and Levitan created their immortal paintings which bring tears to the eyes of spectators and love towards the unhappy creatures. Prominent authors like Tolstoy and Gorky wrote novels in which revolutionaries were portrayed as the most dignified people. The Revolution and its dreams were their gospel and to a great extent they exemplified traditional Christians who were persecuted for their convictions as one could see from a famous poem by Nekrasov about Chernyshevsky: "He was sent by the God of wrath and grief to remind the Tsars of the earth about Christ."

When the Party came to power, there was for a short period a stage of uncertainty and hesitation. Lenin's agonies in the last two years could be explained by his uncertainty about which way to go. In his *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx wrote: "The traditions of all dead generations hang like a nightmare over the minds of the living ... And exactly at the time when they are going to accomplish something unprecedented in history, they adhere to the incantations of the dead", imitating the examples of the past. Lenin could go no further than Cromwell who ordered the beheading of Charles the First, and to repeat the various deeds of the Great French Revolution. He did not, however, proclaim himself as another Napoleon.

There were two candidates for the new Napoleon - Trotsky and Stalin. Their fight for the title was severe. When Stalin came to power, he launched into the extermination of Trotsky's and his other rivals' followers. He was much smarter and cynical in the area of imitating the examples of his counter-revolutionary predecessors, like those of the Thermidor, but he was especially cunning in the field of imitating the

experiences of the Russian Tsars and Patriarchs. There can be little doubt about his restoration of the many sides and features of the traditional Russian monarch. For our discussion, it is no less interesting to trace Stalin's and his successors' attempts to imitate the image of the Patriarch this time very much embodied as the General Secretary of the Communist Party.

The image of the Party patriarch was being carefully created against the background of the Party myth, where the whole Party looked very much like the Church with its own hierarchy, its own clergy, the system of privileges, duties and taboos, and the network of correspondences with the purely secular power. Like the *Sobor* of the Church, the Party had its own highest Assembly, its periodical Congress of the Party, to whose decisions all the members of the Party must unconditionally and blindly adhere if they want to remain in the ranks of the Party. The Congress of the Party should be convened with some regularity, which Stalin had entirely ignored for the reasons which will be hinted at below, and the Congress' decisions can be qualified by no other words than as "historically path-finding". For almost thirty years the decisions of the 20th Party Congress about Stalin made the present-day leaders choke with indignation and impatience to delete them from the annals of the Party's history; but they are still unable to do this and to restore the sweet image of Joseph Stalin, defiled by Nikita Khrushchev's secret midnight speech and remarks.

Since the Communist Party is at least nominally in no way related to the political power of the country, its status reminds one essentially of the Church in medieval society when any position of power depended very much upon the ecclesiastical status of a person. Until modern times, there were rarely examples of cases in which important state positions were entrusted to persons who did not belong to the official Church. In traditional Russian society, the Tsar was simultaneously the head of the Church and the resultant dilemma bothered all of the leaders, since Lenin was the head of the Soviet Government as well.

Stalin experimented with his title of General Secretary prodigiously. For a long period he was the Chairman of the Commissars' Soviet and then of the Cabinet of Ministers. Khrushchev hesitated for a while but then grasped the same position and held it in his hands until his removal. The Party's Assembly under Brezhnev announced its special decision to separate the position of the General Secretary and the head of the government. Somehow Brezhnev, with his frequent visits abroad and the welcoming of the heads of various governments, found himself quite often in an ambiguous position, which was resolved in the 1970's by the removal of N. Podgorny and the grasping of the position of the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet into his hands.

Yuri Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko repeated this gesture and it seems that, in violation of the long tradition, the Soviets, who are supposed to represent the various layers of the society, especially the non-Party members, are now under the full control of the Party's leader. Anyhow, this trifle should not bother serious minds.

What is much more essential is the position of the Party's leader and his role as the Party-Church's patriarch. As a rule, the patriarch should be elected for life. Patriarch Nikon was removed from his office in 1666. The same happened with Khrushchev in 1964. But these are very rare instances of removal from both of these high offices. Throughout the centuries, the heads of the Church survived until their natural death, even if this death was accelerated, as it was in the case of Patriarch Tikhon. Equally, Lenin, Stalin, Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko and, we should assume, Gorbachev must sit on the tiger until they die riding astride.

The Party patriarchs are not supposed to be wrong in any way while they are still alive. Whatever their real nature, they should be praised for their wisdom. Their family life should remain very much in the shadows. It is not very bad when they are married, like Khrushchev and Brezhnev, and have many children along with their husbands, wives and lovers. However, it is better to be childless, like Vladimir Lenin, because in this way all of the country's people are their children, eager to worship and embrace their father. But the best condition among all these is not to be married or to be in the status of widowers, thereby belonging entirely to their nation. Nothing bad could be said of the example of Stalin who had brought his younger wife to death. Stalin did not see great sense in convening Party Congresses for thirteen years after March 1939, for the Party patriarch had been elected and the Party parishioners were given the necessary instructions for all the emergencies of life.

Under the umbrella of the patriarch, the Party metropolitans function in their high position. As members of the higher Party Presidium or Politburo, they are responsible for the most important areas of the Party-Church life. These people should be predominantly elected for life, as was the case with Stalin's elite. If some of them disappear, their removal should be exercised without great fuss. Metropolitans are not supposed to attract too much attention and they should not steal the show from their patriarch. Their family life should flow in the shadows as well. A classical example of a splendid Party metropolitan was Mikhail Suslov who died in January, 1982. Being almost a Grand Inquisitor from birth, he never gave any food for wide-spread gossip and backbiting, although no one will refute the statement that Suslov was a real kingmaker. Needless to say, the patriarch and the metropolitans must be elected from among males. The

case of Katerina Furtseva, who was elected in the late 1950's as a Party Presidium member, was perceived as a clear failure.

Initiation into the Party takes place after a long trial period. After a person becomes a Party member, he must participate on a regular, almost everyday basis, in all kinds of Party discussions, meetings, masses and litanies. As a Party member he should begin and finish his speeches and writings with litanies to the Party and the current Party patriarch. When he points to a Party misdemeanor, he has to be repeatedly reprimanded and forced to repent. The Party is always correct and there is nothing wrong in confessing one's incorrect attitude towards the Party. One should repent to the extent of self-denial. Nevertheless, if a Party member behaves in a way that he deserves to be expelled from the Party, his subsequent life should be molded in such a way no one else would feel any envy for his lamentable existence. In other words, he should be burnt at the stake, literally or metaphorically.

But everything in the country, each speech and each conversation, official or unofficial, should be filled with Party spirit and Party-mindedness. Radio and television broadcasts should not omit these even for a second. The same Party-minded principles should be stated and then repeated twenty, one hundred, one thousand times, without mercy, without regret. All these litanies and praises to the current leader, all the panegyrics and eulogies to the late founders of Marxism-Leninism, all the curses upon the renegades and silence in regard to some others, the appeals to sacrifice life for the sake of the proletariat and its first country, the strong faith in the future of Communism and the infallibillity of the Party despite the obvious facts that from time to time errors connected with the parish of millions take place - all these aspects of the Party life, like the prayers of the *isihasts*, are only a drop in the boiling cauldron of Party existence and theorizing.

The Party acts as a highly mythical body, a pyramid crowned with a person who is almost divine, omniscient, wise, fatherly and caring for each and all. The founder of the system, Vladimir Lenin, lies in the Mausoleum and his relics are sacred, much more so than the relics of saintly figures in the history of Russia. Everything connected with Lenin's image is sacred and one is not supposed to repeat those numerous jokes about Lenin which are spread among the intelligentsia and many other people. The image of Lenin is used and misused not one hundred percent but ten thousand percent to such an extent that many people are almost sick when his name is mentioned.

Since the Russian people had been expecting the Anti-Christ, they received him not only in the figure of Lenin, but especially in the person of Stalin. Both are quite fit for the image of the Anti-Christ, but perhaps Stalin outsmarted Lenin in this sense. Lenin was modest, at least in his outward behavior. He was relatively knowledgeable,

intelligent and compassionate towards his friends and relatives. But, as we mentioned earlier, Lenin succeeded in creating the most diabolical organization in the history of humanity, capable of overthrowing one system and perpetuating another one, incomparably more inhuman and immeasurably more ruthless, with leaders who called black white and evil good.

Stalin enjoyed Satanism itself. He could not have any false ideas about his own future in the other world, a future about which he once talked with a patriarch. To magnify his own grandeur, he attracted the aura of the tamed Russian Orthodox Church which lauded him to the sky, having been forced to bow before the devil while on its knees. Stalin divided his existence into two worlds separated by waterproof walls, the official and the unofficial one. He consciously had been creating the myth at the center of which he placed himself. People were supposed to know very little, if anything at all, about his personal life. He lived in the Kremlin and was the embodiment of wisdom and love. The words of wisdom belonged to him and to nobody else. All other great leaders of Russia, including Ežov, Berija and Žukov are to be great because they follow his enlightened instructions. Sometimes they follow them perfectly, in which case, they are removed, like Ežov, and nobody knows about their fate. Furthermore, nobody expresses any interest in knowing their fate. Stalin knows; that is enough. Stalin had been friendly with Lenin. Stalin had built the new giant industry and supervized the process of collectivization, thanks to which millions of collective farmers were so happy that writers could not find the proper words to express the joys of these absolutely oppressed and desperate people. All the people of Russia, old and new, proclaim at any auspicious moment their gratitude to Comrade Stalin for their happy childhood. In the 1950's, a joke was spread about ninety-year-old men who were marching along Gorky Street in the 1930's with a loud slogan: "We are grateful to Comrade Stalin for our happy childhood." Some passers-by hissed at them in wonder: "Are you crazy? When you were children, Stalin was not even born." The old men answered immediately: "Exactly for that we are grateful to him."

The majority of those killed by Stalin's orders or actions were not mentioned at all afterwards. Some, including Kirov, Maxim Gorky and S. Ordžonikidze, became a part of the Soviet hagiography. Stalin won the war against Hitler. He headed the country after the war in restoring the economy. Stalin was everywhere and he was the best myth of all. His unofficial life should take volumes to describe. He was mean, angry, vengeful, and remembered only too well what others wished him to forget. He was blood-thirsty, petty, cowardly, deceitful, hypocritical, fond of pornography, and so on. Stalin was the real and perfect Anti-Christ. It is doubtful that another personality of his caliber

will climb to the top of the Soviet hierarchy. None of his successors had any chance to shape their own character under such hard circumstances as were imposed by Stalin-Džugašvili. Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Andropov and Gorbachev are undoubtedly evil, but there is little in them to compare with this "genius of all the nations". The greatest thing they can do is to repeat some of Stalin's actions, mottos, inclination to wit, persecutions of people, and the means by which he perpetuated his own great and unrivalled image.

The Party does not simply exist. It propagates, punishes its enemies, establishes prison camps, and lies to the young generation as well as to the whole world. A part of its activities is directed to the goal of perpetuating the myth about itself. This myth is grand and impressive. The Party is said to have been founded by the greatest people who had ever lived on the earth. Intelligence and integrity, courage and knowledge of the proper moment, love towards the human race and the greatest ability to sacrifice themselves for the sake of the working class - this is only the beginning of their virtues. From the very beginning they were loved by the working class and by poor peasants who were doing nothing else but waiting for the emergence of these great defenders of their cause.

After the Revolution, there were many difficulties and the enemies of the proletariat did not want to capitulate at once. Their long resistance was defeated by the Party and its great leaders. The Party gained the upper hand in many fields and led the Soviet people from one victory to another. The whole world had been looking with great hope to the young Soviet country, and after the period of isolation, the country is now only one among so many other socialist countries and others who are ready to embark upon the socialist road. "Imperialists" of the leading bourgeois countries are shivering before this irreversible growth of Communist influence and might.

In each area of the human spirit and human life - economics, politics, science, arts and everyday existence - the Party has achieved great "victories" such as people used only to dream about or hear of in fairy tales. The socialism and the Communism that is going to be built in the next years or decades will open the greatest horizons in the history of human spirit.

All these victories could be achieved only because of the Communist Party, "the mind, the dignity and the conscience of our epoch". The best people of the human race are allowed to enter the Party. They dedicate their best efforts and brains to the Party, based on the friendship, co-operation and honesty of the best people of the world. The Party reacts immediately to all signals given in life. Any forms of criticism and self-criticism are welcomed in the Party and as a matter of fact it is a sacred duty for each member of the Party to

remember and practice this great Communist virtue.

The glorious edifice of the Party has been built in such a way that only "the best" may be promoted to the higher levels of its structure. The more honest, intelligent and efficient the members of the Party are, the higher they will be promoted in order to make their contribution to the glorious cause of the building of Communism and the spreading of socialism throughout the whole world. The Party attracts to itself everything that is good and noble; and it opposes everything that is rotten, reactionary, backward and non-scientific.

Unfortunately and inescapably, in such a tremendous endeavor some "mistakes" and "failures" happen from time to time. Every once in a while, the wrong people succeed in sneaking into the Party and hurting its "glorious" image and cause. But the Party with its wisdom and infallibility is never afraid to criticize its members for their mistakes and deviations, even if they stand at its very top. The whole world saw that the Communist Party did not hesitate in launching its brave campaign to liquidate the consequences of "the cult of personality". The Party had done everything in its power to eliminate the roots of any of these undesirable and regrettable scenes and phenomena which have so long hindered "our" victorious march to the heights of radiant Communism where, everybody will fully enjoy perfect happiness and the development of all their creative abilities for the sake of a grateful humanity.

CHAPTER TEN

The People's Attitudes and the Future of the Party

The myth about the Party has been interwoven with the concept of the Party's closeness to the people. Each time the Party's theoreticians talk about the invincibility of the Party, they mention the Party as unbreakably linked with the people. In crucial statements, the victories of the Party are indivisible from those of the people. What does this mean? Is this simply empty rhetoric which has nothing in common with reality? Is it just a simple effort to link the Party and the people in order to whitewash the Party's actions and crimes by its innate union with the people? When Stalin in the 1930's described the union of the Party and the people through the mythological images of Anteus and his mother Gaea, the earth, was this just more nonsense or was there something else behind it all?

The Party is considered to be the Party of workers. A serious problem arises from the mere fact that the workers have no great wish to join the Communist Party. At the same time, whenever these workers apply for membership, they are almost automatically welcomed unless, of course, they are incorrigible drunkards and sloths. Peasants are less welcome to the Party and in their majority, peasants do not know what they would do in that organization. Nor do the workers themselves, on whose behalf the Party actually exists, understand their duties much better. Though the Party is constituted of some workers and peasants, its majority is made up by people belonging to the Soviet intelligentsia - the clerks, the military people, the state security police and the professional Party contingent. At each factory and plant, institution and detachment, there are Party-carded people whose role consists only of being Party organizers and personnel officers.

In order to understand the peculiar nature of the relationship between the workers and the Party, it is sufficient to examine a photograph of workers in some plant or factory which can often be found printed in newspapers. These photographs are supposed to demonstrate the enthusiasm with which the toiling masses support the historic decisions of the Party and the government, but it is obvious to any unprejudiced observer that these blunt, bored and exhausted faces express almost nothing of the kind. The common Russians have nothing to do with the Communist Party. They live their own life. They try to avoid the boring and dull Party meetings where they are forced to be present. They have no enthusiasm at all for the leaders of the Communist Party. Concerning Lenin, at least, they will not say

anything bad. In regard to Stalin, some old workers would say that he liked order, although they will not argue very much in a confidential conversation if one tries to prove to them that Stalin was an executioner. Truck drivers are famous now for keeping Stalin's portrait on the front panel in their trucks. But one will not find any special love for Stalin in them. Concerning Khrushchev, workers spoke with contempt. They nourished the same feelings for Brezhnev and there are no grounds for thinking that their attitude towards Andropov or his successors is different. Workers understand that at the very top a bitter struggle for power takes place and, after another round of struggle is over, they will be informed about the results and told whom to applaud as the new leader. They will not give a damn about this new leader and the only thing they are worried about is whether they will have a chance to earn slightly better money than before. "Let them kill each other. We do not care about that. We are worried only about how to earn another ruble."

The Party seduced and corrupted the working class and one can hardly expect the working class to express its own opinion about events in the country. If from time to time riots take place in the country, as in Novočerkassk in 1962, for example, it is because the workers are pressured by lowered wages and increased food-prices. When these riots and strikes take place, the workers eventually feel the rigid hand of the KGB and of the Party. It is certain that after a while the ringleaders of the riot and the strike will be arrested and imprisoned. Workers and peasants know from hear-say and stories told by their parents and elderly people about what had happened in the 1920's and 1930's. They know that they should keep quiet to survive.

However paradoxical or controversial it may sound, one needs to say that the Party indeed corresponds to a great extent to the wishes and desires of the common people. This question needs careful additional scrutiny, but without the consent of the people, the Party could not survive for so long. Of course, the Party and its organs did their utmost to eliminate all those belonging to the ordinary people who had struggled against the Party and its policy. By the testimony of so many different authors, those people who were so courageous as to express their disagreement with the Soviet system and its Party, eventually found themselves in a very difficult situation, including prison, Siberian exile, or even death.

The gigantic machine of Party propaganda and indoctrination has been directed first of all at convincing the common people that they are the happiest of creatures in this world, enjoying such great privileges as employment, relatively cheap lodgings (which are rather more remindful of dogs' dens than of human dwellings), free medical care (to which the high Party officials never address themselves for they know its real price), and all kinds of sanatoria and resorts. In order to under-

stand the real nature of the Soviet Party and its system, one needs to be a simpleton, madman, or a very clever person. All other members of the society create all sorts of illusions and fantasies regarding the real nature of the country they live in. This does not mean that they are very happy about this life but, ultimately - especially with the help of alcohol and in the absence of real information because of the omnipresent and sophisticated media - the ordinary Russians simply become victims of this indoctrination. Lidija Čukovskaja described her impression of a taxi-driver's thoughts. Georgij Vladimov reproduced the world outlook of those who served the system in an area adjacent to the prison-camp area. The number of examples is practically endless and they all confirm the idea that the common people are by no means antagonistic towards the Party.

Grown-ups are quite satisfied when their children have joined the Communist Party. The younger people who become religious conceal the icons hanging on the walls of their apartment from the glances and attention of their parents. Many mothers in the Soviet Union advise their children to enter the Party rather than attend Church services because they know from their experience that interest in the Church brings the enthusiasts to jail. Parents know the cruel nature of the country they have lived in for many years.

Common people quite often believe that something interesting is going on behind those walls where the Party meetings take place. With great stoicism and enigmatic curiosity, these people are still ready to attend the semi-mandatory, open Party meetings, where they hear the speeches of their officials and seniors. The idea that the common people are the real masters of the country does not necessarily arouse their laughter. But at the same time they do not ask too much from their leaders. The common people know too well how difficult it is to rule them and, strangely enough, they are grateful to their leaders and senior officials for exercizing their functions. They seem to think that without their work the country could indeed plunge into limitless chaos and bloodshed. They know that anarchy and a penchant for cruelty are concealed in their blood and they need somebody to keep them under control.

There is definitely something attractive in the Party for the common people. The Party seems to correspond to the common people's idea about a group of smart, prominent and responsible persons who convene secret meetings where they discuss problems and matters of vital importance for their life. During their history, Russians have obeyed so many various institutions - such as the Tartar yoke, their own princes and Tsars, the gangs of Bolotnikov, Razin and Pugachev - it is no wonder that they do not find anything extremely bad in the institution of the Party. There is definitely something appealing in it for them.

The Party is mainly a Russian body. It takes care of Russia and strives to perpetuate Russian strength on the international stage. It takes care of the Russian people in various ways and not necessarily only verbally. Russia underwent so many battles and ordeals that the Russians are very much afraid. They indeed have serious reasons for feeling that the Russian state is being seriously threatened. From this point of view, the Russians are ready for further sacrifices in order to establish the dominance of their country. They are essentially nationalistic and they are flattered that various other national minorities - the Poles, the Lithuanians, the Uzbeks and the Georgians - find a lot to learn from them. They see little wrong in these nations' dependency on Russia's supremacy. In sum, the Russian people have something in themselves which helped the Bolsheviks seize power. Before the Russians understood how unhappy they were under the new regime, they became guinea pigs for an unprecedented historical-social experiment. The nation, as victim of its own tragic historical evolution, became an agent of the dangerous historical shifts and eventually a victimized collaborator in the Party's globe-transforming efforts.

The situation has progressed so far that, for the time being, there is very little hope that the common Russian people will change their attitudes towards the Party - at least in the next few months or even years.

The Communist Party constitutes an enormously complicated phenomenon in which a number of positive features can be discerned as well. The Party is a source of some stability in the country. It promises a certain future to the people. The Party organizes a system of education and medical care. Under its guidance a complex network of publishing houses, media and recreational institutions, as well as ties with foreign lands and interrelationships between various peoples of the country have been set up. Industry and agriculture, scientific and artistic institutions have been organized by it. Nor should one omit the establishment of the state security institutions and the country's military strength.

But, if the world survives, the Party will be remembered for ages for its horrifying contribution to the world of injustice and embodied evil. With the creation of the Soviet state, evil ceased its existence as an unreal, fantastic, imaginary substance. Evil exists and survives there as a real substance in diverse forms and transformations.

The Party and its oligarchs keep control over the nation and the state. All people who are born there become the property of the state, the Party, and the state security police. Until their death, they continue to remain their property and perhaps one day the Party will try to invent a means of keeping these people in its hands even after their deaths. From that point of view, one should note that interest in Fedorov's ideas about the resurrection of the dead generations has been revived in

the country and his works, based on the highest idealism and selflessness, are going to be reprinted there.

The Party owns all the millions of people who reside on the territory of Russia and never doubts its right to handle them according to its dogmas and whims. The Party as the trustee of the state and the twin of the state security directs education in the country and the formation of its people according to its evil plan with the goal that they will never know any other view or any different system of values. The system of education, of transformed information, of provided jobs, rewards and punishments, is arranged in such a way that the majority of the people will voluntarily refuse any search for the truth and any putatively better values because of the fear that they will lose their privileges and will become scarecrows in this society.

The Party thoroughly checks all the country's citizens from the point of view of their thinking, expression of thought, and actions. All actions directed to the strengthening of the system will be ultimately rewarded even if initially real Lysenkos and fictional Drosdovs (from Dudintsev's novel) would not prevent inventors from implementing their ideas. But any actions directed at undermining the system will be undoubtedly rejected and ruthlessly punished. On the level of words, statements and writings, persecutions will be no less effective. So far as thoughts are concerned, thought-persecution is regularly launched, as had happened in the time of Stalin, but it seems that nowadays, the repression of mere thoughts, unexpressed and not reaching any social level, are at least not as effective as before. There is no guarantee that these persecutions will not come back in any week or month.

The Party essentially denies each of the citizens of the country, without any exception whatsoever, the freedom of will, freedom of choice, freedom of thought, word and action. The Party has created its own notion of truth and its own scale of values. The truth is something that has been announced by the founders of Marxism-Leninism, but even these statements can be rewritten and revised at any time. No place for God and the search for God remains in this society. One can retain his religious views only to the extent that he or she belongs to one of the officially allowed and sanctioned denominations or Churches. Any Church or faith which goes beyond the officially recognized one must be persecuted.

The aim of the Party is to deprive the human beings inside of any information from the outside. In addition, the Party does its utmost to defile the sources of information from outside of Russia. The Party creates the pseudo-Church inside and tries to influence maximally various Churches outside of the Soviet Union. Those who serve the Party's dogmas are rewarded; those who defy the Party's dogmas and policy are persecuted. The repressions for defying the Party's policies

are ruthless to the extent that the victims are not treated as human beings. They will be acknowledged as such as soon as they repent and express their wish to serve the Soviet state and its Party. One finds it difficult to say for sure which is ultimately worse for a person, to be permanently rewarded by the Party and its organs for serving the Party's interests, or to be persecuted without being broken. In the former case, as has been confirmed by many authors, the person is ruined. In the latter case, the person survives and thrives. In the country it has swallowed up, the Party has succeeded in establishing a real kingdom of lies and violence where all the traditional values survive in an entirely transformed shape.

A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE

What can one say briefly about the future of the Communist Party in Russia and about the country itself? It is becoming clear that the Party has lost almost all of its ideological force but it has nevertheless retained all of its strength and might within and outside the country. The system of education and indoctrination, as well as the method of keeping the people of the country under strict control, are so rigid and efficient that it would be wrong to predict any great and rapid changes in the near future. Until the present, the Party, in close co-operation with the KGB and the army, continues to have limitless means for suppressing riots or individual protests.

The Party has limitless financial resources by which it can buy millions of people inside the country and organize support for its own policies outside of the country, through foreign international governmental institutions, the media, university campuses, the intelligence service, the peace movement, and an unprecedented espionage network. On all levels of its activities, the Party achieves what might be termed an "over-insurance for its interests". Where it needs only one thousand agents, it has ten thousand. Where it needs one billion dollars to publicize its policy and to disinform public opinion, it allocates five billion dollars. Instead of one thousand missiles, it prepares five thousand. No other state in the world can afford to subsidize with such funds the invitation of politicians and writers, scientists and scholars, artists and trade-union members, Church leaders and progressive activists of various levels to its country and to entertain them and to provide splendid conditions for recreation, along with visits to Potemkin villages.

This policy is implemented while the people of the Soviet Union have no chance to make and express their own judgement. To the whole world, it seems that what is going on in Russia belongs to a

paradise, interwoven with stability and prosperity. It makes a favorable impression on many people who are exhausted by permanent feuds and struggles, by terrorism and hijacking, by looting and kidnapping in the rest of the world. As far as the Soviet leaders are concerned, there are no scandals, bribes and Watergate stories among them. They seem reasonable, although slightly mysterious and reserved, people. Whatever is said about them in the press should be cross-checked, for otherwise it is not entirely trustworthy. But to check these stories is not so easy. The testimony of the dissidents about them and the situation within the country are equally untrustworthy. But the example of Soviet freethinkers is most revealing. What they have succeeded in doing after Stalin's death is enormous. But they were unable to change the country and the Party's system. They worked to a great extent as pathfinders toward a new political, intellectual and spiritual land. One can hope that others will follow them and settle on these lands discovered by them. But this is not so easy. It is dangerous and often lethal. If they are able to change the system within the country in the very near future, this will be another miracle. From the point of sheer probability, such events do not have a very good chance of being realized.

In addition, the Party cannot continue to rule forever without any radical change. It is clear to everyone that the Party is woodened and hardened. The question arises as to determine how to make it more alive, vital, and more closely connected with life; how to make it less vulnerable to those who want to exterminate it along with a good part of its membership.

There are many peaceful avenues by which the future might develop. The Party will most definitely explore more and more the road of state-capitalism. In economics and intellectual endeavors, the role of personal interest and profit will necessarily increase. But there are too many limitations on this road for the Party. It fears for its own fate and security. It might proceed on the road of external expansion, thereby increasing the feelings of nationalism and Messianism. The Party will gradually increase its state-chauvinistic aspirations and continue at various stages to adopt more elements from the traditional Russian Orthodox Church, which now finds itself under the full control of the state and the Party.

Many people inside the Soviet Union dream of ruining the system, but they are unable to accomplish this. From within, the regime can be defeated by nothing short of a miracle in the years to come. In the outside world, there are numerous opportunities to weaken the regime and ultimately defeat it. But those who are able, do not want to do this. They live their own quiet and comfortable life. The situation might change when the menace of Communism is felt here more acutely.

How many years or decades will the regime based on the Party last? Nobody knows for sure. It is better not to cherish very high expectations. For almost three centuries, the Tartar yoke lingered in the young Rus'. For another three centuries, the dynasty of the Romanovs survived. Nothing now indicates that this regime based on the Communist Party will not last for an indefinite period of time, unless those who hate evil and feel fear are ready to dedicate themselves to another life-long struggle with this armed devil.

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5. A case when even after Stalin's death the wife denounces her husband, a Party member, has been provided by Yuri Vetokhin in his book, *Sklonen k pobegu*, U.S., 1983, pp. 71- 72.
6. A. Chekhov, 'Chelovek v futlyare', *Sobranie sočinenij*, Pravda, Moskva, 1970, p. 261.
7. Aleksandr Yashin, *Richagi*, ed. by Edmund Stillman, *Gor'kaia zhatv*a, Praeger, 1961, pp. 62-79; Svirsky, *Na lobnom meste*, p. 145
8. N. Janevič, *op. cit.*, p. 142.
9. P. Grigorenko, *V podpolye mozhno vstretit' tol'ko krys*, Detinets, New York, 1981, pp. 453-482.
10. The Church wedding of Petr and Zinaida Grigorenko was celebrated by Fr. Dmitrij Dudko; cf. P. Grigorenko, *op. cit.*, p. 742.
11. Grigory Svirsky, *No lobnom meste*, pp. 113-19.
12. P. Grigorenko, *op. cit.*, 753-54.
13. A. Zinovyev, 'Autobiography', *Survey*, 1977-8, v. 23, p.3.
14. *Uncensored Russia*, ed. by P. Reddaway, pp. 83, 447.
15. *KPSS v rezoljucijach i rešenijach*, Politizdat, Moskva, t. 10, 1972, p. 434.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. 'Revolt Pimenov', *Pamiat'*, v. 3, p. 7.
2. It is well-known that the Decembrists were deprived of their nobility. The same happened with Fyodor Dostoevsky in 1849, who was, however, later on restored in his nobility.
3. *Pamiat'* 2, p. 532.
4. P. Grigorenko. *V podpolye mozhno vstretit' tol'ko krys,* pp. 479, 509-10, 523.
5. 'Trotskyists at Vorkuta', *Samizdat, Voices of the Soviet Opposition*, ed. by G. Saunders, Monad Press, N.Y., 1974, pp. 213-16; Roy Medvedev, *K sudu istorii*, Knopf, 1974, p. 508.
6. Medvedev, *op. cit.* p. 461.
7. Vladimir Ufland, *Teksty*, 1955-1977, Ardis, 1978, p. 7.
8. Roy Medvedev, *op. cit.*, p. 360.
9. *Ibid.* p. 507.
10. *Samizdat, Voices of the Soviet Opposition*, ed. by George Saunders, p. 206-216.
11. In 1925 Trotsky wrote in *Bolshevik*, "Vladimir Ilich left no 'testament'"; cf. Robert Vincent Daniels, *The Conscience of the Revolution*, Simon and Schuster 1969, p. 274.
12. Roy Medvedev, *op. cit.*, p. 361.
13. N. Janevič, *op. cit.*, p. 151; A. Sakharov, *Razmyshlenniia ob intellectual'nom progresse ...*
14. *Samizdat* p. 281; *Politicheskii dnevnik*, Amsterdam, 1975, p. 368.
15. P. Grigorenko, *V podpolye mozhno vstretit' tol'ko krys*, p. 770; Leonid Plyushch, *History's Carnival*, ed. by. Marco Carynnyk, Harcourt Brace Jovannovich, N.Y., 1979, p. XIV.
16. A. Zinovyev, *Ziyayushchie vysoty*, L'Age d'Homme, Lausanne, Suisse, 1976.
17. Vladimir Maksimov, *Proshchanie iz niotkuda*, v. 2, p. 248.
18. N. Janevič, *op. cit.*, p. 156.
19. Dostoyevsky, *Chudožnik i myslitel'*, ed. by A. Grisunin and others, Moskva, Chudožestvennaja literatura, 1972, p. 24.
20. *Ibid.* p. 19.
21. N. Janevič, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-9.
22. *Ibid.* p. 158.
23. I. Voznesenskij, 'Tol'ko vostokovedy', *Istoričeskij sbornik*, v. 3, Moskva 1978; *Pamiat'*, Paris 1980, p. 435-36.
24. *Ibid.* p. 435.
25. *Vremya i My, Posledniaia nadezhda vyzhit'*, 75-77, 1983-84.

26. *Vremya i My*, 82, 1985.
27. *Russkoe Vozroshdeniye* N. 11-13.
28. *Vremya i My*, 75, p. 101.
29. *Vremya i My*, 76, p. 138.
30. *Vremya i My*, 76, p. 134.
31. *Vremya i My*, 77, p. 141.
32. *Vremya i My*, 77, p. 137.
33. *Vremya i My*, 77, pp. 141-42.
34. Natalja Eksner's address is: Moscow, U.S.S.R., Ulica Vvedenskogo, 13 corpus 1, apt. 363, tel. 339-13-59.

CHAPTER SIX

1. Nadezhda Mandelshtam, *Vospominaniia*, pp. 115-19.
2. Aleksandr Orlov, *Taynaia istoriia*, p. 125-7.
3. Svetlana Alliluyeva, *Tol'ko odin god*, Harper and Row, 1969, p. 150-51.
4. For this information I am grateful to Inna Rubin (Jerusalem, Israel), whose close relative had worked with Krupskaya.
5. Some details on E. Furtseva's personality is given by Ernst Neizvestnyj in his *Govorit Neizvestny*, Possev, 1984, pp. 30-36.
6. Aleksandr Galich, *Kogda ya vernus'*, Possev, 1981, pp. 173-6; Y. Glazov, *The Russian Mind Since Stalin's Death*, pp. 149-52.
7. *Pamiat'* 5, pp. 159-60; Raisa Orlova, *Vospominanija o neprosedsem vremeni*, Moscow 1961-81; Ardis, pp. 91-2.
8. On Valentina Grizodubova, see Svetlana Alliluyeva, *Tol'ko odin god*, Harper and Row, N.Y., 1969, p. 331.
9. *Uncensored Russia*, ed. by Peter Reddaway, p. 83.
10. Raisa Orlova, *Vospominanija*, Moscow 1961-81; Ardis, 1983, pp. 240-59.
11. Raisa Orlova, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-21.
12. Boris Pasternak, *Doctor Zhivago*; the poem 'August'.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Yuri Elagin, *Ukroshchenie iskusstv*, Chekhov Publishing House, N.Y., 1952, p. 5.

2. Dmitry Panin, *Zapiski Sologdina*, Possev, 1973, p. 23-4.

3. *Uncensored Russia*, pp. 80-81; P. Grigorenko, *V podpolye mozhno vstretit' tol'ko krys*, pp. 716; Vladimir Bukovsky, 'I vozvrashchaetsya veter', *Khronika*, N.Y., 1979, pp. 212-13, 229-30.

4. Valentin Turchin, 'Inertsiia strakha', *Khronika*, N.Y., 1977, p. 26.

5. N. Janevič, *Pamiat' 5*, pp. 125-132. In A.A. Elistratova's words: "this is a typical case when a man of our time has sold his soul to the Devil. He could have written so many useful books; he knows so much. But instead of this he shuttles between the Head of the Institute, the Dean's Office and other institutions", p. 131. Among other institutions, the state security was obviously meant.

6. Grigorij Svirskij, *Na lobnom meste*, p. 202.

7. A. Tvardovskij, *Tyorkin no tom svete*.

8. This information has come from G. Svirskij. While in the Air Force during World War Two, a member of his crew used to say: "Don't say anything like that in my presence."

9. Ignazio Silone, with whom I met several times in the Summer of 1972, used to say that.

10. Grigory Svirsky, *Na lobnom meste*, p. 438.

11. A.E. Levitin-Krasnov, *V poiskakh novogo grada*, III, p. 231; Y. Glazov, A.E. Krasnov-Levitin, in A. Krasnov-Levitin, *Iz drugoi strany*, Poiski, Paris, 1985, p. 165.

12. *Vestnik RSChD*, 1972.

13. N. Janevič, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-122 ff.; A.E. Levitin-Krasnov, *Vospominanija, Ruk tvoich žar*, V. II, pp. 121, 192.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Roy Medvedev, *K sudu istorii*, p. 766. "Members of state security were instructed: first you are a Chekist and then only you are a Communist."

2. Adam B. Ulam, *Stalin, The Man and his Era*, The Viking Press, N.Y., 1973, p. 737.

CHAPTER NINE

1. Lidiya Chukovskaya, *Protsess iskliucheniya*, YMCA-Press, 1979, p. 196.

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